

RIZAL AND THE UNDERSIDE OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY

Upon reflection, it seems to me that much of scholarly writing on the Philippines bears the stamp of a certain familiarity with which the country's traditions and patterns of development have been treated. In contrast to those parts of Southeast Asia that have been transformed by the "great traditions" of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism and which, as a result, have had that aura of the exotic and impenetrable about them, the Philippines has appeared transparent and knowable, a "natural" consequence of the experience of some four hundred years of Spanish and American colonialism. It is difficult, for example, not to be taken in by the Hispanic features of Philippine pueblo society: Christianity, the diatonic scale, *amor propio*, *caciques*, and so on.

When John Phelan's book, *The Hispanization of the Philippines*, appeared in 1959 it made us review drastically the supposed effects of the Spanish conquest.¹ Filipinos were no longer deemed passive recipients of Spanish cultural stimuli; their responses varied from acceptance to indifference and rejection. Because Phelan had never set foot on the Philippines nor learned a local language, however, his reading of Spanish source materials was framed by his familiarity with the history of Latin America. Phelan attempted to close the gap between Spanish observers and the strange, exotic natives they wrote about, not by letting the natives speak but by assimilating them to the body of knowledge concerning Hispanization in the Americas.

The problem is not just that Phelan and most non-Filipino scholars before the late 1960s failed to use indigenous source materials, but that such records bear the unmistakable stamp of Spanish colonial influence. Furthermore, except for the rare diary or cache of personal correspondence, such materials are often classified as devotional or literary and fail to provide accurate documentation of the past. This has led to some anxiety among Filipinos about whether it is possible to have a truly Filipino history prior to the mid-nineteenth century.² It is true that evidence exists about the islands prior to the conquest, that certain regions such as the hill country of northern Luzon and the Muslim south escaped Hispanization, and that violent reactions to colonial rule were fairly regular. Such themes, however, have not been able to offset the familiar view, in educated circles at least, that a golden age was lost in the wake of the conquest. A long dark past of Spanish rule sets in until there occurs, in 1872, a turning point, the initial sign of a shift in consciousness from blind acceptance of Spain's presence to an awareness of the causes behind the people's suffering. In that year, the public execution of three reformist priests stirred up so much public sympathy and outrage that the bonds of subservience and gratitude toward Spain and the friars were seriously weakened. As the familiar textbook narratives go, from 1872 until the revolutions of 1896 and 1898 a nationalist spirit is born and reaches maturity in the struggle for independence. Such is the frankly evolutionist view of the Philippine past that serves to instill Filipino pride in their nationalist struggle, the first of its kind to occur in the Southeast Asia.³

The problem with this view is that it rests on the assumption that before the impact of liberal ideas in the second half of the nineteenth century, Filipinos lived in a kind of static dreamworld somewhat like children initially fascinated and eventually enslaved by the cosmology introduced by the colonizers. In 1890 Jose Rizal, the foremost Filipino intellectual and patriot which the nineteenth century produced, provided in his annotations to a seventeenth-century Spanish text scholarly legitimization for the view that, with Spanish rule, the people "forgot their native alphabet, their songs, their poetry, their laws, in order to parrot other doctrines that they



did not understand." The result of their blind imitation of things foreign and incomprehensible was that "they lost all confidence in their past, all faith in their present, and all hope for the future."⁴ Rizal had labored for a year in the British Museum to document the image of a flourishing precolonial civilization, the lost eden, which he, the offspring of an era of enlightenment, awakened consciousness and self-assertion, felt burdened to put in writing. The Filipino people had to move forward, and in order to do so had to be aware of their origin, their history as a colonized people, and the general progress of mankind to which their future should be geared.⁵

Rizal's construction of a "usable past" in effect privileged the status of the *ilustrados*, the liberal-educated elite that viewed itself as among other things, released from the thought-world of the history-less, superstitious, manipulated masses, the so-called *pobres y ignorantes*. In the very act of interpretation, then, Rizal suppressed—unconsciously, perhaps—phenomena that resisted his ordering mind. These, nevertheless, exist on the fringes of his life and work, and can be retrieved if we set our minds to it. In the 1960s and 1970s we wasted much effort by endlessly debating whether Rizal was a realist or an idealist, whether or not he is deserving of the veneration he receives. We continue to probe the intentions behind his actions, speeches and writings, and attempt to clarify his contribution to the process of nation-building. Yet, there is no questioning of his evolutionist premises, particularly the notion of emergence itself, which belongs to the realm of the familiar, the "common sense." As we shall see, this notion is problematized in the meanings that Rizal's gestures elicited among the *pobres y ignorantes*. Rizal became implicated in the very world which the *ilustrados* sought to efface. What we shall seek to uncover in particular is the play of meanings which his dramatic execution in 1896 set into motion. If this event were simply a condemned man's attempt to perpetuate his own memory, or his martyrdom against oppression and obscurantism, then why, among many other acts of martyrdom and execution, was it singled out, remembered, commemorated for decades after? What modes of thought apart from that of the *ilustrados* informed the event?

THE "FALL" IN ILUSTRADO CONSCIOUSNESS

How we understand change in the nineteenth century is connected to the problem that Phelan raised about the nature of Hispanization. Given the incontrovertible fact that the *indios* were converted to Christianity, we need to move beyond established and familiar views of how their world was affected by the new religion. On one hand, professedly Catholic writers and Hispanophiles claim that Christianity brought civilized ways, salvation, and unity to the island.⁶ On the other hand, nationalists argue passionately that Christianity was a weapon for facilitating the political and economic subjugation of the native.⁷

In either view, the indio is the passive recipient. The Spanish friar, as representative of God on earth, is seen as exerting a powerful moral hold over his native wards. For better or for worse, he interprets the proper rules of Christian behavior, rewarding the obedient and submissive, and punishing evildoers. Furthermore, there is an implicit assumption that Christianity's impact can be understood by reference to certain core characteristics, foremost among them being its otherworldly orientation that encouraged resignation to the reality lived by the *indios*: resignation to forced labor and the head tax, submission to the whims of the *maguinoó*, or native chiefs, and later the *principales*, who were mostly agents of colonial rule. Those who are unwilling to criticize the religion itself view its particular expression in the Philippine context as one of excessive pomp and pageantry, of countless festivals, processions and rituals that kept the *indios* in such a state of fascination that they failed to grasp the reality of colonial exploitation.⁸

To whatever pole the argument tends—Christianity as the *indios'* salvation or Christianity as the root of their alienation—there is always room for allowing for or celebrating the triumph of liberal ideas in the late nineteenth century. In the first place, the notion that Christianity belongs to the realm of the otherworldly as distinct from the secular and political allows the data on popular disturbances and uprisings, and the rise of the nationalist and separatist movements, to be constructed on a "secular" scale that rarely touches upon the ideas of the "unenlightened" because

these appear to belong to the sphere of religion, narrowly defined.⁹ Following upon this, Christianity is simply equated with something primitive and repressive that has to give way to more progressive forms of consciousness.¹⁰

The consequence of these modes of interpretation is obvious for the history of popular disturbances and revolts. If they occur during the "preenlightenment" centuries, they are regarded as instinctive, largely localized reactions to oppressive measures, "nativistic" attempts to return to a precolonial past, at best primitive precursors to the revolution.¹¹ Her horizons narrowed by religion and the divide-and-rule tactic of the Spaniards, the indio is deemed unable to comprehend her situation "rationally": thus she reacts blindly, in the gut, to mounting irritants impinging upon her. Only with the advent of Rizal and the ilustrados is there supposed to be a clear understanding of the causes of dissatisfaction. Only with the founding of Andres Bonifacio's Katipunan secret society is there an organization with clear strategies and goals. When the Katipunan is superseded by Emilio Aguinaldo's republican government, the Filipino people are seen to be finally released not only from the colonial mother country but also from a dark past. The history of "failure" ends with the birth of the secular, progressive, enlightened republic in 1898.¹²

With the dominant constructs securely established, it is impossible to regard as anything but a curious sidelight the fact that President Aguinaldo, very much in the style of the eighteenth-century rebel Diego Silang, was also seen as the liberator sent by God.¹³ Or that Rizal, like Apolinario de la Cruz in 1841, was hailed as a Tagalog Christ and king.¹⁴ In 1898 and 1899 the republic, very much like the old colonial administration, was beset with unrest led mostly by popes, christs, pastors, and *supremos*.¹⁵ Such "sidelights" suggest that personalities and events toward the end of the nineteenth century were repetitions, with variations, of the past. They draw our attention to the fact that limiting frameworks have been applied to nineteenth-century Philippine history, and that excluded or "excess" data abound with which we can attempt to confront the dominant paradigms, and elicit a play of meanings in place of closed structures. If Rizal belonged to a series of christs

and Tagalog kings, we might well ask what the conditions are for inclusion in the series and the mode of historical awareness this suggests. Rizal then becomes less the intellectual achievement of the century than a complex figure who offered different, sometimes conflicting, readings of his life and work. And since the peasant challenges to the Malolos republic suggest that the latter's triumph was in a sense also a failure, we might well examine the line that demarcates judgments of success or failure. When Apolinario de la Cruz, whose *Cofradía de San Jose* was brutally suppressed in 1841, met his death at the hands of the executioner it was with such serenity and inner peace that we cannot but regard it as a moment of triumph. What sort of "death" was it in the first place when, some thirty years later, he returned to instruct a similar figure in the reorganization of the *cofradía*? Some of the movements that challenged the republic—notably the *Katipunan ni San Cristobal* and the *Santa Iglesia*—were just like the "failed" *cofradía* of 1841.¹⁶ Was it, among other reasons, an impatience with this persistent return of "primitive," "irrational" forms that led the republic to suppress these movements?

The reappearance, the persistence over time, of figures bearing the mark of Christianity could be interpreted as a sign of the total Filipino subjugation by Spain. It could signify the break, the loss, and the enslavement resulting from the conquest. Rizal lamented the fact that Philippine traditions were no longer authentic because their origins were either forgotten or patently foreign. To him, the forgetting of origins marked the onset of darkness. "These traditions [of links with Sumatra]," he laments, "were completely lost, just like the mythology and genealogies of which the old historians speak, thanks to the seal of the religious in extirpating every remembrance of our nationality, of paganism, or of idolatry."¹⁷

Philippine literary histories speak of the lost literature of the lowlands being replaced by religious poetry written at first by Spanish missionaries and then by select indios who had served as translators for the Spaniards. The themes of such poetry seem divorced from Philippine experience: "love for the Holy Family," "God the light of the world," "Mary, star of the sea" guiding men in their voyage through the stormy darkness of sin and igno-

rance.¹⁸ There are traces of a predominantly seafaring Malay society in the last theme, but it is located in a sea of darkness, illuminated only by the light of a foreign ideology.

In the eighteenth century, metrical romances from Spain and Mexico were allowed to be translated or to serve as models for a popular form of indigenous literature called *awit*. This transplanted to Philippine soil the traditions of European medieval romance. Tagalog poetry became dominated by themes ranging from the passion of Christ to the crusades against the Moors.¹⁹ Ilustrados from Rizal to this day have lamented this apparent distortion of the Filipino mind. "Born and brought up . . . in ignorance of our yesterday . . . lacking an authoritative voice to speak of what we neither saw nor studied"—Rizal could not have better expressed the anxiety of being left to one's own wits, unanchored in a stable past.²⁰

The lack of a continuous, uninterrupted history of Filipino consciousness lay behind the ilustrado nostalgia for lost origins. Rizal's efforts to reconstruct the history of a flourishing, pre-Spanish civilization that entered upon a decline can be viewed as an attempt to reconstitute the unity of Philippine history, to bring under the sway of the ilustrado mind the discontinuities and differences that characterized colonial society. The ilustrados were very much in tune with nineteenth-century conceptions of history. Predictably, though, they were not attracted to the Marxian analysis of the relations of production, economic determinations, and the class struggle that would have raised questions about their own status as the voice of the Filipino race. Rather, their activity was geared to the late nineteenth-century European "search for a total history, in which all the differences of a society might be reduced to a single form, to the organization of a world view, to the establishment of a system of values, to a coherent type of civilization."²¹ Ironically, the demand for order and coherence led to a critique not only of the Spaniards but also of the ilustrados' ancestors who, admitted Rizal, had lost their heritage because they had "hastened to abandon what was theirs to take up what was new."²² Ignorance and naiveté are the familiar explanations for what appears to have been the absence of fixed boundaries in the conceptual world of the early Filipinos.

One fact that renders the notion of a "fall" problematic, however, was the survival of the indigenous languages. For example, the whole crop of foreign story lines in Tagalog literature, which on the one hand suggest a certain loss of authenticity, upon closer examination turn out to be masks that conceal age-old preoccupations. We shall see later on that the failure of such terms as "soul" and "self" to encompass the meanings of *loób* (lit., "inside") releases the Tagalog passion of Christ (*pasyón*) from the control of the church. The translation of alien storylines and concepts into Tagalog not only resulted in their domestication, their assimilation into things already known, but gave rise to various plays of meaning.

THE POWER OF KING BERNARDO

One of the "alien" stories that we can use to confront ilustrado constructions of the past is that of the Spanish legendary hero, Bernardo del Carpio.²³ In the Tagalog awit version that appeared in the mid-nineteenth century, the scandals and tragedies of Spanish royalty, the crusades against the Moors, and the personal narrative of Bernardo are obviously of foreign origin. But after successive reprinting and oral recitations of the awit which ranks with the *pasyón* as the best-known story in the late nineteenth century—the hero Bernardo Carpio became the king of the Tagalogs hidden or imprisoned within a sacred mountain from which he would someday emerge to liberate his people. He became known as Haring (King) Bernardo or San Bernardo, or simply Bernardo. Perhaps if he had remained an isolated creature of "folk beliefs" he would not be of much interest to us now. But sometime during the turn of the century, Rizal appeared at Bernardo's side. What does this meeting signify? What does it suggest about the contours of popular thinking?

As we saw in the previous essay, reduced to its bare outlines, the awit is about a boy of enormous strength and limitless energy who grows up unable to control or focus these powers. This can be attributed to the fact that he is separated from his parents, brought up by surrogates who deprive him of the *layaw* and subsequent

disciplining that only true parents can give. He serves the king of Spain (his stepfather) well but somehow remains the brash and uncontrolled youth who subdues his Moorish adversaries through brute force (*lakás*). Nevertheless, the events which bring him closer to reunification with his parents are marked by correspondingly greater control and efficacy of his powers. Soon after a letter from heaven reveals to him the identity of his parents, he accomplishes single-handedly the task of liberating Spain from French domination.²⁴ One can readily discern in the awit a refraction of the theme of lost origins, Bernardo being like the Filipinos who fell from an original state of wholeness, came under the domination of surrogates (e.g. Spain, the friars) and therefore remained in a state of darkness and immaturity until they recognized their true mother again. It is easy to see why ilustrados, as well, took an interest in this awit.

Rizal was familiar with the Bernardo Carpio story and its more evident folk meaning as the imaging of the aspirations for freedom of the pobres y ignorantes.²⁵ The revolutionist Andres Bonifacio, as we saw, may even have tacked nationalist meanings on to the awit's form.²⁶ Still, however, King Bernardo was a "folk belief" or an expression of "popular culture," to be noted and even used, but from whose underlying presuppositions about power and the cosmos the ilustrados had been released. Educated Filipinos tend to dismiss the complex articulations of the Bernardo Carpio myth as plain falsehood and superstition. And yet I would argue that the main features of a powerful narrative of the past are contained in the myth. This kind of history is alive even today particularly among those who live on the fringes of urban society.

It is not difficult to imagine what historical consciousness was like in the nineteenth century before mass education was implemented. How does Rizal get implicated in it? It does seem far-fetched to link the intellectual who shunned violent uprising with the youth who subdued the Moors through brute strength. But *lakás* (force) is only one of Bernardo Carpio's attributes, associated with a certain lack of inner control, which is the father's duty to teach his son. As we shall see, the tale becomes the locus of thinking about the nature of true power in the context of which Rizal then appears.

Our focus this time is not the main body of the Bernardo Carpio awit, but its ending and the various supplements to it. After the climactic scene in which Bernardo is reunited with his parents, the awit breaks free of the Spanish legend. We recall that the hero travels about in search of pagan kingdoms to destroy. When he reaches a churchlike structure guarded by two stone lions, a bolt of lightning suddenly strikes and pulverizes one of the lions. Agitated, Bernardo disposes of the other statue, and then challenges the lightning itself, vowing to find and destroy it. In the distance are two mountains bumping each other at regular intervals (i.e., *nag-uumpugang bato*). As Bernardo approaches it, a dazzling angel appears and informs him that the lightning he is looking for has gone into the mountain, where Bernardo can neither see nor get at it. When the angel himself enters the mountain, Bernardo stubbornly follows with drawn sword, and the mountain closes in on him.

At this point the awit formally ends, but various appendices have been added to it, not to mention the belief in Bernardo as the Tagalog king, that verify its status as a living text. There is the story of a stranger who manages to enter the cave in which Bernardo lies sleeping. Awakened, Bernardo tells the stranger: "I am Bernardo Carpio who has lain here for a long time. If you want to acquire my strength, give me your hand, let's be friends." But the stranger, seeing the many skeletons lying around, wisely extends a piece of bone which crumbles to pieces as Bernardo grasps it. Bernardo then declares:

You are lucky. Because you are intelligent, I am your friend on whom you can depend. Take the little cross near my head as a gift from me. When you are in danger, just say devoutly *Christum* and the danger will be averted by the power of the Son of God. I am being punished here by God for my sins, but God is good and I am alive. I am hoping that the time will come when I can arise from my imprisonment.

So go, and tell the people about my condition, so that they will be reminded that Jesus after he was interred rose



again. In the same manner, I that am now confined in my stone bed inside a cave will, in time, be able to return to town. For almighty God has His reasons; He singles out one man as savior of the oppressed. So tell the oppressed people that their Bernardo will soon rise and save them.²⁷

Bernardo's journey in search of idolaters is in effect an outward movement—away from the narrative's core (which is based on a Spanish model) into the realm of thinking about power, its concentration in the mountain, and the problem of access to it. At this stage of Bernardo's career, he is an embodiment of *kapangyarihan* (lit., power), the spiritual substance that "animates" the universe and is often concentrated in certain power-full beings and objects.²⁸ This is revealed in his challenge and pursuit of the lightning, which is concentrated, intense light (*liwanag*) and another form of *kapangyarihan*. The lightning, the dazzling angel, and Bernardo himself form a series of such concentrations of light/ power which successively enter the mountain.

Bernardo, as king of the Tagalogs, is thus little different from kings elsewhere in Southeast Asia whose potency is derived from their ritual location at the centers or summits of sacred mountains. In Bernardo, however, there is a crucial difference: the king is hidden, prevented by "almighty God" from leaving the mountain's interior. The potency concentrated in the *loób* of Bernardo and the mountain—they are one and the same—cannot be demonstrated, cannot flow out and animate Bernardo's world. The promise that he will one day be able to return to town suggests a gap between the king/mountain and the populace, a gap that did not exist in the past and will be bridged in the future. By way of contrast, in the Indic states, the hill or palace signifying Mount Meru is located at the center of the realm; the ruler is a node of potency that radiates well-being and attracts followers.²⁹

In explaining that his entrapment in the mountain is God's punishment for his sins, Bernardo points to the Spanish and, in particular, Christian intervention in the story. The *awit* says that Bernardo committed the sin of pride in thinking that he was as powerful as God, who responded by enclosing Bernardo in what

could also be regarded as a tomb. The Christian idiom becomes evident when God introduces the possibility of liberation. Bernardo is singled out as the future savior of the oppressed who asks the stranger to remind the people that just as Jesus arose from the grave, someday he, too, will "rise" to save his people. Bernardo Carpio is also Jesus Christ. In the meantime, he serves as a reminder, to those who subscribe to the myth, of a past time when *kapangyarihan* was accessible to all through him. This contrast between a past when men participated freely in *kapangyarihan* and a present in which only traces of it remain, and the promise of liberation, which will restore access to this power, repeats at another level of discourse the structure of the *awit's* core story. The distinction, which a spirit (through a medium) made to anthropologist Robert Love, between "Bernardo Carpio" and "San Bernardo" now makes sense: "Bernardo Carpio," said the spirit Papa God, "is mentioned in verse; he's just a strong man on [the face of] the earth . . . [San Bernardo] is another: he also has *kapangyarihan*. It's as though he had an amulet [*anting-anting*] . . . It's as though he were king of those who have amulets."³⁰

The fact is that Bernardo never manages to free himself. During the revolution against Spain rumors were widespread that only the hidden king's right foot remained pinned, that soon he would descend from the mountain leading an army of liberation. No less than Andres Bonifacio himself contributed to what *ilustrados* branded as "false hopes" by claiming that an army would descend from Mt. Tapusi, where Bernardo's cave is most commonly located.³¹ The time of the revolution was also the time of Bernardo's imminent but unsuccessful escape. Yet, despite this apparent failure, the myth still accounts for the fact that the Katipunan uprising was perceived as the tremendous unleashing of energies.³² We recall that the stranger who arrives wishing to acquire some of Bernardo's strength demonstrates his "intelligence" and is given a little cross, an *anting-anting* or *galing*. Bernardo reveals to the stranger the word—*Christum*—that must be uttered in order for the object to have efficacy (*bisa*). The *anting-anting* is, in effect, a mode of access to Bernardo's *kapangyarihan*. Its proper use entails that the stranger be intelligent in the Tagalog sense

of having a controlled loób and knowing the formula to “feed” the amulet.³³

Because of this proper relationship to the source, the stranger is Bernardo in the sense that he embodies the latter’s power. And since this power is also, as Bernardo says, of the Son of God, the stranger is Jesus Christ as well. The stranger, in fact, has other proper names—Jose Rizal, Jose Burgos, Miguel Malvar, and a host of other patriots who are said to have entered the mountain.³⁴ These names designate not individual life-histories but a certain preoccupation with, or thinking about power and change.

In 1917, a university student recounted the following conversation he had with his father:

When I was your age, some people said that the two hands of our king were already unfettered. Later, when I was a young man already, I heard from many people that Rizal had visited the king. This fortunate youth brought the happy news that Bernardo had only one foot left chained.

. . . Father, is our king very strong?

Yes, he is so strong that Rizal did not dare shake hands with him. Rizal was wise enough to give the bone of a cow instead of his hand; because when Bernardo grasped the bone, it crumbled to dust.

. . . And where is Rizal, Father? Is he not dead?

Rizal has gone to visit our king again. As soon as he spread the news that King Bernardo was coming very soon, he went back to the cave of San Mateo. He will stay there until the king gets free; then he will come back to announce Bernardo’s arrival in order that we may prepare to receive our true king.³⁵

In the above story, the stranger is given a name: Jose Rizal. His initial entry into and emergence from the mountain may even be

temporally located in the period of the Katipunan uprising of 1896. The return to the mountain corresponds to Rizal's execution in December 1896. In 1930, a student reporting on Laguna, Rizal's home province, noted: "It is a common belief among the country folk that Rizal is not dead. He was hidden somewhere and will appear again when the Philippines regains her independence."³⁶

The virtual identification of Rizal with the hidden king raises many questions about the shape of nonilustrado thought during the colonial period. What do we make of the underlying repetition in the stories that have been brought up? What does Rizal's meeting with Bernardo suggest about the folk interpretations of the crucial changes taking place in Rizal's time? Rumors like the ones narrated above admittedly varied from region to region, yet there is a consistency about them on the level of ideas of power and change that invites us to reexamine certain key notions about sociocultural developments during the Spanish period. Only after interrogating such familiar notions can we catch the manifold implications of the Rizal-Bernardo meeting.

THE UNDERSIDE OF HISPANIZATION

Rizal is often called "the first Filipino" because he figures the rise to dominance of the *principalía* class, whose Europeanized sciences became the nucleus around which a modern nation could crystallize. The roots of this progressive, largely nationalist class are inextricably bound up with the initial ordering of Philippine society in the aftermath of the conquest. The main task of Spanish missionaries and soldiers in the seventeenth century was to concentrate or resettle people within hearing distance of the church bells. At the very center of a major settlement (*pueblo*) were a Catholic church, a convent, occasionally a *presidencia*, or town hall, surrounded by the houses of the local elite. Comprising the bulk of this elite up to the nineteenth century were the *datu*, or *maguinoó* whom the Spaniards had transformed into a petty ruling class that learned to profit from an alliance—sometimes uneasy—with the colonial masters.

From the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth century, increased economic opportunities, such as commerce in export crops, land speculation, and tax farming, brought to prominence a new class of Chinese mestizos often enmeshed through kinship with the local maguinoó families. Rizal was of such Tagalog-Chinese stock. Hailing from one of the vast friar estates, his family, like many others of the *principalía*, was in a position to lease large tracts of farmland from the Spanish friars to be cultivated by sharecroppers. The wealth and prestige of the *principales* made them second only to the friars in terms of respect and obeisance from the common *tao*. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the period coinciding with the rise of liberalism in Spain, the *principales* viewed the friars as the remaining obstacles to their rise in power. Thus began the first stirrings of the propaganda movement against Spain.

The pattern of Filipino settlements—local churches as focal points of population concentrations, looking to Vigan, Cebu, Manila, and other religiopolitical centers for guidance and sustenance—bears comparison with centers of population in the Indic states of Southeast Asia. Reinforced by Hindu-Buddhist ideas of kinship, a ruler in the Indic states was a stable focal point for unification. His palace was a miniature Mount Meru; he himself was the source of the kingdom's well being—the abundance of its harvests, the extent of its trade relations, the glory of its name. What made this all possible in the first place was the notion that the ruler participated in divinity itself, represented by the supreme ancestor apotheosized as a Hindu god. With the aid of a brahmin, the ruler was familiar with the formulas and rituals needed to concentrate the power (*sakti*, *kesaktian*) of the ancestor-god in himself, to make him a living amulet whose efficacy was felt in decreasing levels of intensity as one moved from the center to the peripheries of the realm. In turn, the nobility and local elite participated in the ruler's power. To take an example from one of the few surviving traditional states in Southeast Asia, in Luwu (South Sulawesi), a way of talking about levels of potency is by reference to the amount of white blood in people. *Dewa*, or gods, have pure, white blood, and they are invisible. The ruler is an incarnate *dewa*, a god-king. The

nobles below him have some white blood (which marks them as nobles) in varying concentrations but less of it than the ruler has.³⁷

With regard to the Philippines, it has always been taken as a matter of fact that a Hispanic model came to prevail; therefore, any attempt to situate the pueblo in the context of its counterparts in the Indianized states tends to be regarded as sheer speculation. This outlook, however, rests upon centuries of Spanish writings that stress the triumph of Hispanization, turning into minor or hidden themes the actual interplay between different levels of thinking about power and the social hierarchy. When the Spaniards arrived, native chiefs, like their Khmer and Malay counterparts a few centuries earlier, were attempting to make their access to deified ancestors a basis for legitimizing their claims of superiority over others. Colin remarks that "whoever can get away with it attributed divinity to his father when he died."³⁸ The suppression of such beliefs and their accompanying techniques of dealing with spiritual substance was one of the objectives of the conquest. The substitution of Catholic saints for village spirits or *anitos*, *scapulars* for *anting-anting*, liturgical songs for chants invoking the spirits, and so forth, reflects, however, a more realistic project of assimilating "Malay" conceptions and practices.³⁹ There is no doubt that as far as the elimination of "superstition" and "animism" among the folk was concerned the Spanish efforts largely failed. On the other hand, the elite that was nurtured in the pueblo complex could not rise to their position of prominence without their thinking and behavior being thoroughly codified by the church/center. As we shall see, in the process of suppressing or assimilating traditional thinking and practices concerning power, the Spaniards inadvertently created an ambiguous relationship (from the perspective of the Indic states) between the church/center, the *principalía*, and the ordinary *tao*.

Catholic churches were no doubt imposing structures dotting the Philippine landscape. When topography permitted, they were located upon hills, "to achieve a greater sense of monumentality," says Reed, but also perhaps out of the friars' observation that hill-tops were nodes of potency.⁴⁰ Churches were also concentrated sources of God's *kapangyarihan*, tapped during church rituals and

through its traces in holy water, statues of saints, other ritual objects, and even candle-drippings. These potential sources of power were controlled by the parish priests. Stories abound of Spanish missionaries and curates who worked miracles, whose blessings were avidly sought for their potency, who were regarded as second christs and revered even after death. The parish priests, it was widely thought, knew the meanings of the Latin inscriptions on amulets and there had access to *kapangyarihan*.⁴¹

Catholic churches can certainly be regarded as concentrations of power just like religious centers elsewhere in Southeast Asia. But unlike, say, the Cambodian nobility, which participated in the ruler's power, the *principalía*, despite the location of their fine dwellings around the church-convento-presidio core, cannot be regarded as mediators of *kapangyarihan*. While they had the greatest physical access to the church—they sat at the center, closest to the altar, at mass—and the parish priest who consulted them regularly, this very fact exposed them more critically to a religion which sought to "destroy idolatry and superstition."⁴² The persistence of "unchristian" practices among the *principalía* was at least concealed from the priest or sufficiently cloaked in approved practices. In fact, some *principales* were known by the townsfolk for their powerful *anting-anting*. But one notices a predominance of *anting-anting* tales in relation to *principales* who had repudiated their ties with the center to become hermits or rebels.⁴³

Phelan notes that sons of chieftains were given a more intensive training in the Catholic doctrine. From the seventeenth through much of the nineteenth centuries, only children close to the church-convento received regular instruction, mainly in religion.⁴⁴ The best among them, "all sons of the better class, looked up to by the *indios* themselves," could train for the priesthood in Manila.⁴⁵ When the *principales* in the nineteenth century went to schools of higher learning—the *colegios*, *seminarios*, the University of Santo Tomas—they further distanced themselves from the world of what they termed the *pobres y ignorantes*. The knowledge they gained was of a different order from the *lihim na karunungan* (secret knowledge) sought by village curers, pilgrims

to holy mountains, aficionados of anting-anting, and even the peasant farmer during propitious times of the year.⁴⁶ The traces of a world sustained and ordered by spiritual energy which, despite their position, the ilustrados would not have failed to notice around them, no longer had a place in their conceptual universe. Perhaps it was the specific condition of being ilustrado that led to this group's anxiety over a lost tradition and the attempt to recover it through historical writing. This writing, as pointed out earlier, privileged the status of its practitioners through its underlying presuppositions of emergence and enlightenment, and Rizal is seen at the forefront of this movement.

Rizal, however, is also implicated in that "underside" of ilustrado history which is generally hidden but is always in play with the dominant threads of Philippine history. An analogy can be made between pueblo society and the Bernardo Carpio story. Both are Spanish-derived, products of the conquest; in both, the question of power is inscribed. The church, like the mountain in the awit, is a node of potency which the friar, like God who imprisoned Bernardo, holds in check. *Kapangyarihan*, or *potencia*, is released in the context of approved church rituals, particularly during holy week, or as a promise in the afterlife.⁴⁷ Close to the center, the preoccupation with kapangyarihan is disguised or hidden. But farther and farther away from the pueblo-center, "tradition" becomes the dominant element in the interplay. Love has observed that villagers at the fringe of pueblo society tend to participate more in the activities of *samahan* (associations) led by mystics, curers, and spirit mediums.⁴⁸ Alfred McCoy likewise amply demonstrates that in Visayan history *babaylanes*—priests or priestesses of the "animist" religion—have always had a tremendous hold over the populace in areas beyond the control of the pueblo-centers.⁴⁹

We can glimpse a world where "tradition" is fully manifest through scattered letters and colonial reports concerning "disturbances" and rebellions. A striking case is that of Apolinario de la Cruz, a mystically inclined lay brother who was prevented from entering a religious order because he was an indio. In 1841, when the Cofradía de San Jose he organized in Lucban, Tayabas, was

banned from attending its special masses in the town church, he fled with his flock of thousands to the slopes of Mount Banahaw. There a commune was set up, dominated at the center by "a large palm-thatched chapel of bamboo, the inside walls of which were hung with colorful tapestries and religious paintings, where Manong Pule presided over . . . mysterious prayer sessions and ceremonies." At least one of the paintings was of this "king of Tagalogs," done in the style of portraits of the saints. The Visayan counterpart of Apolinario was a certain Buhawi (Waterspout), also called king or living God, whose popular movement created "disturbances" in 1887. Buhawi's headquarters was a cave on a ledge of a steep cliff of whitish rock. Inside the cave was a mysterious room, the door of which opened with a rap from the leader's cane to expose marvelous riches. When in the lowlands, Buhawi lived in a fine wooden house, "so brightly illuminated with candles that it appeared as if the dwelling were lighted with electricity." Prior to his flight to the hills, Buhawi was known to be a devout Catholic.⁵⁰ Our final example takes us to Cabaruan in central Luzon, where a religious confraternity called Guardia de Honor built a commune at the height of the Philippine-American war. At the center was a house where Antonio Valdez, who styled himself as Jesus Christ, lived and performed rituals together with the Virgin Mary. Dwellings for the mostly peasant members were built in straight lines radiating from the center, like spokes of a wheel.⁵¹

Certain parallels between the examples above and Indianized rulers elsewhere are obvious: they distributed amulets, had the status of god-kings, their "temples" or "palaces" were nodes of potency animating the world around them. It must not be forgotten, however, that these Filipinos are described as previously having been devout Catholics. They represent not aberrations, but vivid glimpses of a general condition of Philippine society under colonial rule. Rizal's connection with the "underside" can only make sense when certain "familiar" notions about religion in the pueblo-centers are reexamined. For this we shall have to look into the religious mythology labeled "Catholic" which had a compelling hold over lowland Filipinos.

THE PASYÓN INTERFACE

To a great extent, the transplantation of the biblical world to the Philippines was facilitated by the social appropriation of the epic story of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. In 1704, the first Tagalog rendition of the story in verse form saw print. By 1760 the *pasyón*, as it was called, was already in its fifth edition.⁵² Critics have pointed out that the popular appeal of the *pasyón* was due to the creativity of its author, Gaspar Aquino de Belen, a bilingual native who worked in the Jesuit press in Manila. Using a seventeenth-century Spanish passion as his model, de Belen was able to transform biblical characters into truly native ones. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph talked and behaved so much like indios that their foreign origins were ignored or forgotten. Any discussion of the *pasyón* and society, however, has to move beyond the craft and intentions of its author. In the first place, the authorship of the many versions that came after de Belen's is problematic. About a century later, anonymous versions in fact began to appear, such as the extremely popular *Pasyón Henesis* or *Pasyón Pilapil* named after the priest (Mariano Pilapil) who edited the anonymous text. In the second place, the appearance of a few heresies as well as the "profane" use of the *pasyón* in native festivals and gatherings suggest that the meanings of the text derived not so much from some authoritative voice within it but from the social field in which it moved.⁵³

As a text produced under the sponsorship of, and periodically censored by, the church officials, the published *pasyón* might be seen as a device for drawing the native population towards the pueblo-center. One reading of the text reveals that it sought to cultivate the virtues of meekness and resignation to suffering. The "imitation of Christ" (*pagtulad kay Kristo*) and participation in his passion repeatedly suggested in the text perhaps translate into submissiveness to the Spanish friar, and the acceptance of things as they are because reward is forthcoming in heaven. In the portions of the text called *aral* (lesson, sermon), the fulfillment of conventional Christian duties is emphasized. Furthermore, the chanting of the text, at least during the colonial period, was held

under the auspices of prominent principales and was therefore an occasion for wealth and status to be demonstrated. The *sinakulo* (passion play) was usually staged right in the local churchyard with the parish priest's blessing and the financial backing of the principales. All this would suggest that the *pasyón* was a powerful tool in the center's continual attempt to dominate and codify its surroundings.

The immense popularity of the nineteenth-century *Pasyón Pilapil* may even have contributed to the forgetting of their "true" origins by the masses. For this *pasyón*—also called *Pasyón Henesis*—provided a comprehensive story of mankind from the adventures of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden to glimpses of the apocalypse. The impact of biblical time in shaping popular perceptions of their origins was such that the following stanzas could appear in a poem, published in 1900, urging a "holy war" against the Americans:

The Tagalog hail from Sem the beloved
and those Chinese, from Cham
the Spaniards, from Jafet the youngest
all children they are of Noah, beloved Elder . . .

Ever since the holy Jesus descended to earth
following upon Moses of ancient times
he has been king of the Tagalog
hailing from the line of Sem.

Kristo has come from our lineage
not from those idolatrous people [the Americans]
and when this war ends in our victory
our tribe's history will be proclaimed.⁵⁴

*Ang mga Tagalog ay kay Sem na ibig/ ang kay Cham naman
silang mga intsik/ ang mga Kastila sa bunsong kay Jafet/ na anak
ni Nueng amang matandang giliw.// Mula nang manaog si Jesus
na mahal/ halili kay Moses ng unang araw/ siang nagiging hari
ng katagalogan/ disendencia ni Sem, ang pinagbuhatan.// Sa*

*atin desendencia nagbuhay si Kristo/ hindi sa kanilang
idolatriang tao/ saka kung matapos na manalo tayo/ ipatatalastas
ang dinaanang tribo*

The incorporation of the Tagalog race into the biblical scheme of history was to the ilustrados one of the symptoms of the ignorance and backwardness of the common tao under friar domination. Rizal sought to rectify this by establishing a continuity between his time and that of a flourishing pre-Spanish past. To him, the formation of a national sentiment depended greatly on a sense of racial affinity and pride that only a documented image of past wholeness and greatness could provide.

In tracing that historical line from past to present, Rizal had to introduce the concept of a break, imposed by the conquest, to explain the backward state of the present. This "break" and consequent decline from a "golden age," however, could also be interpreted through a religious template. In the manifesto, *Ang Dapat Mababid ng mga Tagalog* (What the Tagalogs Should Know), the revolutionist Andres Bonifacio restates much of the content of Rizal's research.⁵⁵ But the words used to describe the pre-Spanish situation—*kasaganaan* (abundance of food, crops, etc.) and *kaginhawaan* (prosperity, a general ease of life)—are also the attributes of paradise in the *Pasyón Pilapil*. The high literacy level and extensive trading contacts of the early Filipinos are reminiscent of the knowledge and oneness with the natural world of Adam and Eve. When the Spaniards arrived, says the manifesto, they offered increased prosperity and knowledge if the Tagalogs would ally with them. Here, the repetition of the *Pasyón Pilapil* episode of the fall is accentuated, particularly when Bonifacio says that the leaders of the Tagalogs "became seduced by the sweetness of such enticing words." For in the *pasyón* the delightful existence of Adam and Eve begins to fall apart precisely when Eve succumbs to the sweet, enticing words of the serpent. The history of the Tagalogs thus returns to a biblical mode. The ilustrado conception of a fall into an age of darkness effectively textualized.

In more ways than one, the popular acceptance of the *Pasyón Pilapil* signifies a movement away from the center, away from its

ideological control and hierarchical system. One demonstration of this is in the meanings that are generated in the *pasyón*'s extensive treatment of Christ's departure from home. That the text should dwell so much on the separation of mother and son is undoubtedly a reflection of the society's preoccupation with *utang na loób* which defines, among other things, an adult's response to the mother for her love and caring. A childhood life of freedom, comfort, and security, to cite some of the meanings of "layaw," nurtures a bond between mother and child that endures until death. It is the "layaw" she has showered upon her son that Mary invokes when, seeing the apostles in tears and Jesus overwhelmed with grief, she senses an impending tragedy and seeks clarification. Jesus, however, merely consoles his mother, saying "it is not yet time" (75:10-11). Later, when Mary implores God the Father to spare her son, she invokes memories of her motherly care and hardships:

You know full well
how difficult it was
nine months I bore him
inside my womb
this was your will.

How even harder it was
when you bade us
to flee to Egypt
how immeasurably tiring
to hold your Son on my lap.

And also, God my Father
how great my anxiety was
and incomparable my grief
when he, having come of age
began to teach the multitude.

*Batid mo na,t, naalaman/ ang lahat cong cahirapan/ dinalang
siyam na bouan,/ sa tiyan co ay namahay/ ito, i, siyang caloóban./
/ Lalong hirap na totoo/ nang cami, i, paalisin mo/ naparoon sa*

*Egipto,/ pagod na di mamagcano/ nang pagcalong sa Anac mo./
 / Ano pa Dios cong Ama/ madla ang aquing balisa/ hapis na
 ualang capara,/ nang sia,y, lumaqui na/ at mangaral sa lahat na.*

In return for all that, says Mary, can't God accede to her plea? Or else, allow *her* to die instead of her son? (79:9-15).

Nothing can alter Christ's mission, which is part of God's plan. Certainly not Mary's suggestion that God should not allow lowly (*hamac*) people to surpass or get the better of his own son (79:5-6). Even the day of departure cannot be postponed by an appeal to the traditional custom that children, even though they happen to be in distant lands, must be with their parents on the day of the pasch (77:13-15). There is more to the *pasyón* than a reflection of social norms, for while these are reiterated, there is simultaneously a movement away from them. After tearful scenes in which Mary musters everything to hold back her son, Christ begins the *lakarán* (journey on foot) that leads away from the mother, layaw, security, and filial obligations, towards certain death on a mountain. The attachment to family—the fundamentally pueblo-based, culturally codified unit of Philippine society—is thus deprived of its rigid, almost sacred status. The *possibility* is present for any indio, not just the *remontados*, *vagamundos*, *tirong*, and other individuals of unusual character—to detach himself from his roots, to embark upon a journey of chance and even death.⁵⁶

The content of the *pasyón* episodes leading to the departure of Christ can thus be interpreted as a movement away from a center. However, the examination of content alone does not explain how meaning is created outside the text. The content is familiar enough to the audience of *pabasa* (*pasyón* chanting) and so it is not the delivery of a certain body of information that really moves them. Quite evident in the departure episodes is in fact the paucity of information and the extensive repetition of intensities of grief, loss, and *damay* (participation in another person's plight). Everyone in those scenes weeps, except Judas. For example, having listened to Christ's words concerning his impending death, the apostles seem to "lose their loób" (*nawawalang loób*) and cannot conceal their tears from Mary. When the latter starts to inquire about things, her

words of concern only intensify the apostles' weeping: "they cried even more / their tears were like torrents of water" (75:5). When Mary herself starts to weep, her son's words of comfort and explanation not only fail to console her but lead her to the brink of death:

Such a doleful reply
words that can bring death
worse than a sharp dagger
that can snuff out the life
of one who is pierced (78:16).

*Uicang calumbay-lumbay/ sagot na icamamatay/ daig ang
mabisang puñal,/ na iquiquitil nang buhay/ nang sino mang
nasasactan.*

The efficacy of speech or formed sounds on the *loób* of characters in the *pasyón* hints at the effect of the repetitive, mournful, chanting of the text on its audience. In the scene where Christ bids farewell (*paalam*), the fourteen-stanza repetition of the language of pain, separation, grief, and loss, up to the point where Christ disappears from Mary's sight, creates the conditions for the separation itself. Without it, there would be no meaning to the scene. Yet, because of it, because it puts the *loób* of the audience in a similar state of *damay*, meaning cannot be predetermined either. Later we shall see how a condition of *damay* induced among the masses by Rizal's Christlike death intensified their support for the revolution. Prior to this event, sometime in 1896, the separation of Christ from his mother was already transposed to a "national" key by the brothers Andres and Procopio Bonifacio. A poem attributed to Procopio begins with the following:

Oh, Mother Spain, we Filipinos
your children, ask forgiveness
the time has come for us to separate
because of your neglect,
your lack of motherly care.⁵⁷

*O inang Espanya, humihinging tawad/ kaming Pilipino na
iyong anak/ panahon na dumating na magkatiwatalag/
sa di mo pagtupad, masamang lingap.*

Uncaring Mother Spain, of course, does not exactly stand for Mother Mary. Nevertheless, Spain was the center during the centuries of colonial rule. Being part of the ordered universe, Spain is textualized so the bonds of utang na loób between her and her "children" may be broken. The transition from the old center to the new (Tagalogs, Filipinos), loses its absolute uniqueness as Bonifacio speaks of it as a lakarán:

Let us, lowly people, press on, bear the hardship
head for the hills and forests
use our knives and spears
let us now defend Mother Filipinas.

*Lakad, aba tayo, titigisa ang hirap/ tunguhin ang bundok
kaluwangan ng gubat/ gamitin ang gulok at sampu ang
sibat/ ipagtanggol ngayon Inang Pilipinas.*

Why not, "onward warriors, annihilate the Spaniards?" Why the image of a journey, of lowliness and individual hardship, if the *pasyón* is not somehow being reenacted, albeit in another scale? Moreover, what repeats itself is not merely the theme of separation, but the emotional intensity of the event. When recited, Bonifacio's poem brings to the audience a mixture of pleasure and sadness which is a sign of the melting of the loób, its detachment from self-preoccupation. For the aim of this and other patriotic songs and poems was to evoke *damay* from the audience; with *damay* participation in the struggle was possible. No wonder there was much weeping in initiation rites of the Katipunan, particularly after the leader's speech.⁵⁸ Isabelo de los Reyes notes that rural folk were not ashamed to shed tears during the war against Spain.⁵⁹ Their "interpretation" of the war coincided with the intensity of their *damay* with the country's *pasyón*.

What made the *pasyón* fulfill the role of a social epic in many lowland Philippine regions was precisely its immediate relation with the world, which explains the futility of ascribing a core of meaning to it. This is evident in the relationship between the *pasyón* and the war against Spain. But let us now examine its relationship with the sociopolitical hierarchy. The attempt of the friars to assert control of authorship over the *pasyón* text, and the tendency of the *principales* to sponsor *pabasa* and *sinakulo* as a way of demonstrating and renewing their status, has already been mentioned. While reading the text, however (generally skipping over the aral portions which reflect the church's attempts to delimit the text), it becomes obvious that a social hierarchy based on wealth, learning, titular rank, and monopoly over coercive power, is devalued, regarded as illusory. The title *maguinoó*, the equivalent of *datu* and reserved for *principales*, is conspicuously used in the *pasyón* by the pharisees, scribes, and other *pinunong bayan* (town notables) who clamor for Christ's death. This would have been viewed positively by parish priests attempting to keep the *principales* in their place, to limit their growing aspirations.

The pharisees, however, are also the guardian of the official religion. It was just as easy for *ilustrado* writers to put down the friars by identifying them with the villains of the *pasyón*, which makes no hard distinctions between church and state authorities. For what ultimately matters is the condition of one's *loób*. Envious, treacherous people—Judas is a prime example—are marked by *loób* that are hardened (*matigas*), perpetually unstable (*di mapalagay*), and disjoined from their exteriors (*labás*). With a few exceptions the representatives of the sociopolitical hierarchy, from Pontius Pilate and King Herod down to the scribes and town officials, are characterized as such. Christ, on the other hand, is poor and lowly (*dukha at hamak*) but attracts a large following mainly in the outskirts of towns. He draws people away from their families and their *maguinoó* leaders by virtue of his overpowering attractiveness which is the manifestation of a *loób* which is whole (*buó*) and beautiful (*maganda*). His words and his radiance produce in his followers an initial disorientation or displacement of *loób* which soon turns into calmness and a focusing of *loób*.

One striking feature of Philippine uprisings is that leaders claimed to be Jesus Christ or various representatives of God. To a certain extent, this was a mimicking of certain roles of Christ in the *pasyón*: as the new king, the messiah, the God-Man. The figure of Christ was either a model for rebel chiefs to emulate or a clever device for attracting followers. Other identifications, such as that between the pharisees and the friars, or Pontius Pilate and the governor-general, can be made. Such "familiar" connections between text and "real world" are implied in any sociocultural situation wherein the New Testament story has taken root, and has provided the impulse for many millennial movements throughout the world.⁶⁰ But if the biblical features of most Philippine revolts are simply representations of the *pasyón* story, the ideological victory of the Catholic church would seem to have been complete. This leads us back to questions of church control, the experience of a "fall," and so forth.

If the *loób* is identical with the Christian soul, whose tarnish or glitter reflects the moral history of the individual, then the *damay* called for by the *pasyón* means nothing more than empathy with the suffering Christ for the purification and salvation of the *loób*. But let us recall the image of Apolinario de la Cruz, a Tagalog Christ, praying in his palace-chapel; of Buhawi, the "Living God," in his intensely lit house; of Antonio Valdez, another Christ praying at the hub or center of Cabaruan. For these leaders, the *loób* is not an inner self that defines a willing, thinking subject and gives it an identity and personality. *Kaluluwa* (soul) is a term which better approximates the notion of an inner spirit distinct from the body.

The difficulty in attaching the word *loób* to a particular meaning lies in the fact that it refers to nothing. Literally meaning "inside," *loób* serves the semantic function of permitting discourse about what animates the external, visible world. In the letters of Apolinario, the idiom of *loób* enables him to speak of concentrations of *liwanag* (light, knowledge, energy) in individual persons as well as the *cofradía*. The relative intensity of *liwanag* is a function of the extent of control or steadying of *loób* that is accomplished through prayer and acts of discipline.⁶¹ *Loób* is thus the place where potency is concentrated and from which it emanates like the

radiance of Apolinario, Buhawi, and Valdez. Once we release *loób* from limiting notions of self and self-purification we may, in fact, begin to understand why the idiom of *loób* is so pervasive in the *pasyón*. Without denying its dominant, church-approved functions, the *pasyón* seems to have also served as a locus of deeply ingrained notions concerning the accumulation and concentration of power.

One of the most dramatic and popular scenes in the *sinakulo* is the *pagdakip*, the capture of Jesus Christ by Judas and platoon of soldiers. The *pagdakip* is usually performed in a field on the outskirts of town, some distance from the plaza or churchyard where the *sinakulo* proper is staged. The excitement of the audience is due partly to the fanfare accompanying the march of the "bad men" to the site, but more so to the way in which popular notions of deception (as practiced by Judas), loyalty (in Peter's armed defense of his master) and concentrated power are inscribed in the Tagalog rendition of the gospel episode. It is the last notion—that of concentrated power—which has escaped the notice of commentators.

According to the *pasyón*, the soldiers accompany Judas because of the widespread belief that Christ is a fierce (*mabangis*) character, which isn't true at all:

He is truly the Lamb
gentle and refined
you may quarrel with him
yet he won't fight back
at you or anyone else (96:1).

*Siya ay Corderong tunay/ mahinhi,t, hindi magaslao/ inyo ma,y,
quinacaauay/ siya ay hindi lalaban/ sa inyo at canino man.*

It is interesting to note that the word *mahinhin* generally connotes modesty and demureness, and is used in reference to women, while *hindi magaslao* connotes smoothness, the absence of rough edges. This brings to mind the quality of *halus* that distinguishes Javanese aristocrats (*prijaji*) from ordinary people who are *kasar*

(lit., "coarse"). Benedict Anderson suggests that the meaning of "halus," which is hard to pin down, "is to a certain extent covered by the idea of smoothness, the quality of not being disturbed, spotted, uneven or discolored." A halus person is almost effeminate—to an outside observer, at least—but because halus-ness is achieved only by the concentration of energy, such a person is believed to be invulnerable. In typical *wayang* (shadow play) battle scenes between halus *satria* (knight) and *kasar* giants, ogres, or wild men from overseas, the *satria* stands perfectly still, eyes downcast, apparently defenseless, while his demonic adversary strikes at him with dagger, club, or sword—but to no avail."⁶² The *satria* could just as well be described as "mahinhin," yet he is invincible. Compare him to Christ in the *pasyón*; in the passage that follows, Christ has just asked the interlopers in the garden who they are looking for:

The treacherous men said
Jesus of Nazareth
Jesus Christ's reply was,
ego sum you are after
It is I, he said, I.

With these words
of Jesus to the idiots
their hearts seemed to be struck
they drooped and fell over
as if they were dead.

Jesus demonstrated fully
his Divinity
and absolute *kapangyarihan*
upon his mysterious utterance
they all lost their *loób*.

And because it was ordained
that Jesus should suffer
he immediately restored

to those traitors
their feelings and potency (96:3–6).

*Ang tugon nang mga lilo/ ay si Jesus Nazareno/ Ang sagot ni
Jesucristo,/ ego sum ang hanap ninyo/ aco nga aniya, i, aco.//
Dito sa sagot na ilan/ ni Jesus sa manga hunghang/ para-parang
nalunusan/ nangahapay nangatimbuang/ na anaqui,i, manga
patay.// Ipinakilalang lubos,/ ni Jesus ang pagca Dios/
capangyarihang tibobos, / sa catagang isinagot/ pauang
nangaualang loób.// At sa pagca talaga na/ ni Jesus ang
pagdurusa;/ ay ang manga palamara,/ pinagsaulang capagdaca/
nang caramdama,t, potencia.*

The feeling of the soldiers is not the result of Christ's decision to fight back after all. Nor is it an effect of their recognition of Christ's divinity. The words "ego sum" (I am) constitute a straightforward reply to their question "Who among you is Jesus of Nazareth?" and reveal nothing about his nature. It is the sound of "ego sum" that makes the soldiers "lose their loób," which is taken to mean their "feelings and potency" until these are restored by Christ. The efficacy of "ego sum" is signified by its retention as a Latin phrase in the text. Rather than refer to a particular object, "ego sum" is a form of speech that makes Christ's potency felt in the world.

"Ego sum" is the same as the word *Christum*, which activates the concentrated power given by Bernardo Carpio to the stranger. And just as Bernardo and the lightning are constituted of the same stuff imaged as intense light, the same goes for Christ. In the following account of his emergence from the tomb, light has the same effect as sound:

Of radiant beauty unmatched
of utmost splendor his body
completely engulfed in light,
was this victorious second Person
who had gone to the hills.

When from the tomb
emerged his holy body
the sentries there
were stunned and toppled over
falling flat on their faces.

An Angel descended
on the tomb's stone lid
his radiance so delightful
no one with weak *loób*
could stare at him fully (177:13–16).

*Diquit na ualang catulad/ cataua,i, sacdal nang dilag/ lubos ang
pagcaliuanag,/ nitong nanalong nangubat/ na icalauang Perso-
nas.// Pagcalabas sa baunan/ nang mahal niyang catauan/
natulig at nangaboual,/ naparapa,t, nasungabang/ ang doroong
manga bantay.// Isang Angel ang nanaog/ sa batong taquip ay
lumocloc/ diquit ay calugod-lugod/ di matitigan tibobos/ nino
mang mahinang loób*

We recall that it was a dazzling angel who tried to prevent Bernardo Carpio from entering the mountain. The fact that he did involved him in an intricate system of repetitions. The "victorious" Christ emerging from his tomb is the liberated Bernardo emerging from his cave to help his people. Since Bernardo never gets to free himself, a series of patriots, foremost among them Rizal, enter and leave the cave bearing some of Bernardo's power. What is the nature of this power? In the resurrection scene above, the soldiers are thrown to the ground by the force of Christ's *liwanag*, or intense light. This radiance, like the sound of Christ's voice, is beautiful and delightful, yet it brings physical harm to those "of weak *loób*" who are exposed to its full force. Sound and image do not represent ideas or convey Christ's message; they are manifestations of the energy concentrated in Christ's *loób*.

"Ego sum," by itself or together with a string of Latin, Spanish, or vernacular words, is commonly inscribed in *oraciones*, efficacious prayers pronounced at the point at which anting-anting

powers are activated by their possessors. Present-day practitioners of invulnerability magic are even referred to at times as *nag-egosum* (persons engaging in "egosum").⁶³ One cannot draw the line here between "Christian" and "animistic" features of holy week rituals. Concomitant with the chanting of the *pasyón* and performance of the *sinakulo*, various kinds of magical powers—ranging from invulnerability to bullets to charms for attracting women—were acquired and tested. Men sipped potions concocted from unbaptized fetuses and oil on a series of Fridays culminating on Good Friday. Men and women placed objects inside the glass case housing the image of the dead Christ, or scrambled for the candle drippings, parts of crucifixes and other objects used in church rituals. They carried wooden crosses and rocks to the tops of sacred hills or through the streets of towns, to be like Christ not only in the sense of purifying themselves but also of concentrating power in objects or in themselves. In an *awit* describing a pilgrim's passage through the ritual sites of Mount Banahaw, the desire to emulate Christ is a dominant theme, and yet when the end of the pilgrim's trials is almost reached, he dreams of being able to disappear at will, fly through the air, ward off bullets and bladed weapons, and attract beautiful women—all demonstrations of *anting-anting* power.⁶⁴

The rituals of holy week which centered around the chanting of the *pasyón* were thus the scene of various "superstitious" practices dealing with the accumulation of power. The fact that local elite and townspeople under the sway of the codifying processes of the church engaged in approved modes of cleansing their souls, reenacting the *pasyón* and so forth, should not prevent us from interpreting holy week as a powerful time to which the masses synchronized their *loób*. This was the time when hermits, vagabonds, bandits, prophets, and renegade *principales*, who with their followers often "disturbed" the peripheries and occasionally threatened the centers, reaffirmed the sources of their prestige: not wealth or educational attainment, certainly not rank in the colonial establishment, but the ability to tap the potencies released by the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ.

THE TEXTUALIZATION OF RIZAL

Having looked into the thinking inscribed in the stories of awit hero Bernardo Carpio and the *pasyón* hero Jesus Christ, let us now turn to the national hero, Rizal. As a young boy, he was undoubtedly precocious and from this fact biographers have traced a continuous line to his *ilustrado* future. But in the world of Calamba where he grew up, his boyhood activities were later interpreted as signs of power. Because he was a frail child, Rizal supplemented his intellectual feats with a program of physical exercise and body-building that included swimming, horseback riding, and long hikes up Mount Makiling. In a way this was to be expected of a well-bred youth. Kalaw notes that "the tests of bravery that a man is put through since childhood teaches him endurance to pain, serenity in danger and, above all, the spirit of bravery."⁶⁵ In Rizal, however, it was a remarkable combination of intelligence and physical endurance that spawned rumors that he could perform unusual physical and mental tricks because of his exceptional control of *loób*. There is, for example, the story of Rizal's healing powers at the age of twelve. When a sickly farmer, seeing Rizal eyeing his ripe cashew fruits, gladly offered them to the boy, the latter turned around in surprise "and when the sick farmer saw his face and kindly features, he felt restored to health."⁶⁶ Some people in Calamba claim that their elders had seen Rizal restore vigor and "radiate comfort" to others. There is also the story of the boy Rizal dared at a party by a bully to demonstrate his magical powers:

Just then a flock of herons was flying over the town to the rice fields. As they were nearing the house where the party was going on, Rizal went to the window and kept looking at them. His attitude attracted the attention of the whole crowd As the birds were almost over the house, he pointed his finger at them and they all dropped one by one to the ground. There was complete silence, then the bully fainted. He dropped to the floor like the birds on the ground Then Rizal relaxed himself, and the herons flew back to the air onwards to the riceland. The

bully opened his eyes also and found himself perspiring with fear.⁶⁷

There are many other stories of Rizal's boyhood powers, his meetings with witches and mermaids, his invulnerability, and so forth. A lot of these accounts, of course, were told after his death, when he had already been enshrined as a martyr and national hero. These readings of his early life, more often than not lacking in hard evidence, nevertheless point to the ability of that "life" (whose presence can never be recovered by thought) to generate interpretations from below. This textualization of Rizal problematizes his neat, but just as "constructed," biographies. In a society where King Bernardo Carpio was no less real than the Spanish governor-general, stories of Rizal's prodigious boyhood activities, as retold again and again, could not but have resonated with popular knowledge of the young Jesus or the young Bernardo, who both possessed unusual concentrations of power. The "myth" of the young Rizal merely repeats the *pasyón* episode of the boy Jesus among the scribes and early sections of the Bernardo Carpio *awit* (a bestseller then) which describe the boy Bernardo's strength. Rizal, Christ, and Bernardo are, in a sense, merely proper names that mask thinking about power and identity.

In biographies of Rizal, careful attention is paid to the national hero's activities in foreign countries from 1882 to 1887 and 1888 to 1892. During these years he earned a degree in ophthalmology, became recognized as well in the fields of ethnography and linguistics, wrote two influential novels and numerous scholarly works, distinguished himself in the Propaganda movement, and so forth. All of these took place *in his absence* from his homeland, in the same manner that the *pasyón* and *awit* stories happened not just in another time but in another place as well. Rizal's absence, it seems to me, was the condition that made possible the final loosening of his proper name from its anchorage in actual experience. Once we cease to preoccupy ourselves with a certain "real" Rizal (or a "real" Christ, a "real" King Bernardo) then we can interrogate the past about the other meanings of Rizal's travels abroad. We can turn to such questions as: What knowledge did Rizal seek and,

apparently, obtain in his travels? To what ends of the earth did this search bring him? What powerful personages did he encounter to whom he could prove his worth? Who, really, was Rizal?

Upon his return from Europe in 1887, Rizal himself saw—and came to accept—the extent to which his life, his biography, was not fully under his control. In the first place, there were the persistent rumors that he was a German spy, a Protestant, a mason, and a heretic.⁶⁸ The friars were undoubtedly responsible for some of these in their attempt to identify him as a subversive and alienate him from the more timid flock. But the deliberate sowing of rumors, it seems, only compounded the friars' problems. For, in a situation of intense speculation about this young man returned from abroad, any unusual attribute, whatever moral implications it had, was bound to be interpreted as a sign of power. Apart from the rumors which abounded, there were also the readings people made of his day-to-day activities. Always fond of excursions into the countryside, Rizal and a Spaniard assigned to guard him once climbed to the top of Mount Makiling and hoisted a white cloth to signal their arrival to the Rizal household. The cloth was seen by others and interpreted as a German flag hoisted by Rizal and a European on Makiling as a prelude to launching a rebellion.⁶⁹ Rizal at the head of a liberating army? This image would be more pronounced in the 1890s.

Upon his first return in 1887, it was Rizal's newly acquired knowledge, his being *ilustrado*, that was interpreted in a drastically unforeseen manner. For security reasons, Rizal was kept at home by his family and his movements curtailed. Deciding to make the best of the situation, he set up a surgery practice and performed a number of successful eye operations. Since at that time ophthalmic surgery was practically unknown in the country, the restoration of sight to the blind was recounted with amazement as a miracle. Almost immediately rumors began to spread about the "Doctor Uliman" (a corruption of "Aleman") who could cure not only blindness but all other afflictions as well.

When Rizal returned in 1892 from his second sojourn abroad, he was continually followed in the streets by a multitude of people seeking the mysterious elixir he would prescribe. His nephew once

heard him pronounce the cure: *Emulsion de Scott*. This was simply a multivitamin preparation, since most ailments at that time were the result of malnourishment. But did it matter what, scientifically, the cure was as long as it came from him? Austin Coates, one of Rizal's more perceptive biographers, suggests that Rizal's miraculous curing powers were believed in, "just as charms worn round the waist, the tattooing of mystic symbols, and the power of spells were believed in, whether the friars liked it or not."⁷⁰

What Coates forgets to mention is that the friars themselves had introduced the figure of Christ, the miracle worker and curer par excellence, whose story is retold in the underside of Rizal's official biographies. The ability of Christ and Rizal to cure the sick stems, of course, not from the "scientific" knowledge of medicine but from the condition of their *loób* which is equivalent to having true "knowledge."⁷¹ Everything that made Rizal *ilustrado*—his travels abroad, education, writings, meetings with prominent people, and so forth—can also be interpreted in terms of his search for the secret knowledge (*lihim na karunungan*) that would enable access to *kapangyarihan*.⁷² The following stanzas from a Rizalist song, which is found in several versions, illustrate this form of thinking:

Is it not that many patriots in the world
have gone forth in search of Christ's commands
which no one has ever found
but for Rizal who traveled throughout the world.

And Jose Rizal of the seventh group
whom the Philippine nation reveres
pored over all of the commands
in holy doctrine and written laws.⁷³

*Di baga'y maraming bayani sa mundo/ lumitaw humanap ng
utos ni Kristo/ walang nakakita kahiman sino/ kung hindi si
Rizal naglibot ng mundo?// At si Jose Rizal ikapitong pangkat/
na iginagalang bayang Pilipinas/ hinalungkat niya ang utos na
lahat sa santa doctrina at leyes na sulat.*

If what Rizal learned were simply the teachings of Christ, why did other illustrious people fail in their quest, and why did he have to travel to the ends of the earth for this knowledge?

Notions of power, writing, and curing intersect in a story, which is typical, told by one Isidro Antazo, a servant of Rizal who followed him from Calamba to his place of exile in Dapitan. Whether or not the story is true or factual is irrelevant. As a reading of Rizal, it is consistent with the body of popular myths that we are presently examining.

The story goes that on one occasion when Rizal had to leave his clinic to attend to a very sick man, he instructed his servant Isidro to attend to other patients who might come in. Knowing neither medicine nor the dialect of Dapitan, Isidro protested, upon which Rizal got a notebook and wrote things in it, which the servant could not even read. This would take care of any problems, according to Rizal. True enough, when some patients came in and "consulted" Isidro, he turned to the notebook:

It moved slightly, then the writings of Dr. Rizal on it became his image, and it spoke to him clearly. At first, it frightened him with wonder [*sic*], but its eyes restored his confidence and he followed carefully what it dictated for him to do. The patients submitted themselves obediently for treatment, though they, too, were surprised almost to the brink of fear, but their faith in the voice and image of Dr. Rizal on the notebook held them steady. After all the patients had been treated, the image and the voice became writings again.⁷⁴

One of the questions raised by the story is that of the status of writing. The aim of the Propaganda movement in which Rizal was involved was to expose the ills of the colony and foster nationalist sentiment through writing. Since the friars and the Guardia Civil were fairly efficient in suppressing nonreligious public gatherings and speeches, the written word, often smuggled from Spain via Hongkong, was the medium for communicating ilustrado thoughts to the local principalía and eventually to anyone else who

could read. "To those who could read Spanish," says Coates, "[Rizal] was the author of *Noli Me Tangere*; to the vast majority who either did not or could not read he was the doctor who could cure all ills."⁷⁵ Writing here is regarded as a substitute for the voice of the author which is somehow anterior to the written word. In the story of Isidro and the notebook, however, the distinction between author and work, writing and curing, collapses. Rizal's writing does not refer to some knowledge external to it. What Rizal knows cannot be "learned" by Isidro because it is unintelligible and proper only to a person of Rizal's stature. This knowledge is power itself and the writing on the notebook is, like the "Ego sum" in the *pasyón* and the inscriptions on anting-anting, an illustration of that power, equivalent to Rizal's presence and convertible to image and sound.⁷⁶ It might be argued that since Isidro could not read, the voice and image into which writing was converted translated its content, which Isidro then followed in detail. The story, however, is silent about the treatment itself. What it seems to underline is the efficacy of Rizal's presence. The initial reaction of Isidro and the patients is one of fear, but this soon turns into "confidence" and "steadiness," or control of *loób* effected by the image's gaze and the sound of Rizal's voice.

The appearance in their midst of an *ilustrado* replica of the *aniteros* and *babaylanes* at the fringes of the town centers went largely unnoticed by the Spanish authorities. What concerned them above all were the political consequences of Rizal's writings such as the subversive novel *Noli Me Tangere* and the well-balanced and documented report of January 1888 on the economic situation in the Dominican estate of Calamba. Feeling themselves under attack, the friars demanded Rizal's arrest and imprisonment. Pre-vailed upon by his family and friends, Rizal left the country in February 1888. Barely three weeks later, the *gobernadorcillos* of Manila presented the civil governor with a petition demanding the expulsion of the friars: the "Manifestation of 1888" which "showed the extent of the discontent lying beneath the surface of Philippine life, which Rizal had touched and activated."⁷⁷

Rizal's sojourn in Europe from 1888 to 1892 is marked by his sustained activation of Filipino sentiments on behalf of the mother-

land. Through his writings during this period he attempted to instill in his compatriots pride in their precolonial past. He examined the effects of Spanish domination and reflected on the possibility of armed revolution. He prodded his more sluggish countrymen to act, helped organize the movement *La Solidaridad*, and generally got involved in the myriad activities and squabbles typically engaged in by Asian nationalists in Europe. This period of Rizal's life tends to belong to the history of the nationalist awakening and its reformist phase. The next phase (armed struggle) is initiated by Bonifacio in 1892 with the founding of the *Katipunan*. If we, however, cease for a moment to retrace Rizal's footsteps in Europe and look into the history of his absence from his homeland, we become aware of another series of events in which Rizal is just as fully implicated.

Rizal's departure from the scene at the height of his prominence as a miracle curer intensified the popular textualization of his career. His absence, in a way, enlarged the space for the interplay of hopes, speculations, patterned expectations and the bits and pieces of news that filtered into the colony. The exact process by which this occurred is perhaps beyond construction. We have evidence only of the striking outcome. In 1889, a townmate wrote excitedly to Rizal: "Alas, Jose! All the people here ask about your return. It seems that they consider you the second Jesus who will liberate them from misery!"⁷⁸ Two years later, a Dominican scribe penned the following report:

In Calamba all the talk is about Rizal's triumph, his promises, the reception accorded him by the scholars in Europe, one of them being the grand Teacher of Filibusterism, Blumentritt; of his travels through Germany, of the power and wide influence he exercised over the nation, of a German squadron he will lead; of the lands he will give to his countrymen from the Calamba estate, where a great state will rise, a model republic.⁷⁹

Most of what the scribe says can be linked to an actual event or a plausible occurrence. Rizal did have a prominent friend in



Blumentritt. He indeed, won great respect in German scholarly circles. He would, if he could, have liberated Calamba from Spain, redistributed friar landholdings and set up a model republic. Beneath these "historical" events, however, lies the structure of myth: Rizal is the Son who goes to the Father and will return with an army of angels; he is the lost King Bernardo who will descend from Mount Tapusi with a liberating army; he is all of those patriots from Apolinario de la Cruz to Artemio Ricarte, who went to heaven or foreign lands and would return with supernatural aid, flying machines, and vanquishing armies.

In June 1892, Rizal was back in Manila, where he was quickly recognized in the streets and followed by a large crowd of excited, questioning people half-running to keep up with him. During the week of comparative freedom before his arrest, he traveled by railway through the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Tarlac, discovering along the way the extent to which his name had fired the popular imagination. Not only were his ideas discussed, but anecdotes of his bravery and accomplishment were told as well. On one occasion, a particularly excitable old man praised Rizal so much that the latter felt obliged to reveal himself, if only to put a stop to it. "When he did so," narrates Coates, "the old man stared at him unbelievably, then kissed his hand, calling him hero and redeemer. Everywhere, too, he found his tricks of sleight-of-hand recalled, people averring that he had supernatural powers."⁸⁰

This other, "fantastic," Rizal has become a victim of the historical consciousness of the ilustrado class. The national narrative tells us that in 1892 Rizal founded the La Liga Filipina, a patriotic organization advocating national unity, mutual help, education, economic development, and reforms in the colonial order. The story goes that among those present during the launching of the Liga was Bonifacio, a warehouseman and great admirer of Rizal who nevertheless found the pace of the Liga too slow. When, less than three weeks after his return, Rizal was deported to Dapitan, Bonifacio began to reorganize segments of the Liga into the revolutionary Katipunan. Efforts by Katipunan agents to harness the exile's support failed. The year 1892 thus appears to mark the end of Rizal's effective involvement in the anticolonial struggle. It was

only after hostilities had broken out against Spain in 1896 that Rizal, aboard a ship bound for Cuba, was brought back to Manila, tried, and convicted of sedition.

Rizal's public execution on 30 December 1896 figures in history textbooks as a solemn pause in the saga of Bonifacio and his successor, Aguinaldo. This solemn pause, however, is ultimately what confounds historians' efforts to rank the personalities and events of the revolution. If, ask Agoncillo and Guerrero, Bonifacio were the "legitimate Father of the Revolution," without whom "it is extremely doubtful whether the Philippine revolution would have become a reality at a time when everybody seemed in despair without doing anything about it," why is he overshadowed by Rizal as the national hero?⁸¹ Together with Renato Constantino, another influential textbook author, they pose the disturbing question: Why is our national hero not the leader of our revolution?⁸²

Certainly, the American colonial administration sponsored Rizal as the national hero because his philosophy of education before independence was a fitting rationalization of the U.S. policy of "benevolent assimilation." To be sure, Rizal represented the aspirations of the emergent middle class which had limited revolutionary goals, feared violence, and was thus easily "bought off" by the U.S. Such arguments, however, are derived from a certain reading of the complex "text" which Rizal was and still is. Among other things, they overlook the fact that Rizal was already a national hero before the U.S. intervened, and that his name was on the lips of many a peasant rebel who rose against the colonial regime far into the twentieth century.

The problem of Rizal's status as national hero follows from the overarching narrative of modernity in which nineteenth-century Philippine history has been situated. Notions of evolution and rationality from the nineteenth century itself are responsible for excluding from this history the "repetitious" and "mythical" aspects of reality. The pervading discourse of subjectivity has led to a preoccupation with Rizal's intentions, the authentic voice behind his texts. The very notion of "text" has been drastically limited to his speeches and writings, and we ask what he really meant at the moment of utterance instead of the possibilities of meaning



opened up by his works even in his absence and death. The commonsense notions of the historical enterprise must be held in abeyance; "familiar" categories of meaning must be questioned; and the submerged data must be allowed to complicate the field of investigation. The year 1892 may constitute a momentous break in one reading of events, but be meaningless in another. It may be a mistake to read "revolution" only in Bonifacio's fiery demeanor and raised bolo, and to read "reaction" or "reform" in the calm, almost effeminate gaze of Rizal, just as it is a mistake to regard the suffering Christ as the emblem of weakness and submission. And as we shall see, Rizal's execution, far from serving as a solemn pause in the forward march of events, ought to be treated as one of the more complex texts of the revolution.

THE MEANINGS OF DEATH

Coates has noted that "the prescience of Rizal, in which dreams contributed only a small part, was extraordinary, verging on the psychic."⁸³ In the context of Philippine rural life, of course, this quality is almost expected of individuals such as faith healers, seers, and possessors of powerful anting-anting. It was not the more common intellectual's romanticizing of death, but a true presentiment, I think, that made him dwell on the subject. In a rare revelation of his inner self, Rizal wrote to fellow propagandist Marcelo del Pilar in 1890:

In my boyhood it was my strong belief that I would not reach the age of thirty, and I do not know why I used to think in that way. For two months now almost every night I dream of nothing but of friends and relatives who are dead. I even dreamed once that I was descending a path leading into the depths of the earth; and there I met a multitude of persons seated and dressed in white, with white faces, quiet, and encircled in white light. There I saw two members of my family, one now already dead and the other still living. Even though I do not believe in such

things, and though my body is very strong and I have no sickness of any kind, nonetheless I prepare myself for death, arranging what I have to leave and disposing myself for any eventuality. *Laong Laan* [Ever Prepared] is my real name.⁸⁴

What is remarkable about this dream is that it reveals, not so much some inner self of Rizal, but the contours of his accession, since boyhood, to the order of myth. In the southern Tagalog region, at least, there are innumerable stories of brilliantly illuminated caverns beneath the earth, particularly in the bowels of sacred mountains, where legendary kings and ancestors dwell. The examples of Bernardo Carpio's cave and the tomb of Jesus Christ immediately come to mind. After his execution, Rizal himself would be regarded by the peasants of Laguna as the lord of a kind of paradise in the heart of Mount Makiling, a place "as bright as daylight" without any apparent source of illumination.⁸⁵ Despite his *ilustrado* status ("I do not believe in such things," he says) Rizal in his unconscious moments is the body through which social conceptions of death reveal themselves or speak. Dying is not an extinction of self but a passage into a state of pure, brilliant potency (i.e., being "encircled in white light"). It is a passage to the depths of the earth, to the center of the world, where potency is supremely concentrated.⁸⁶ This dream of 1890 is important because it serves as a counterpoint to Rizal's intention that his mode of death should follow Christ's example.

When Rizal was thrown into Fort Santiago prison in November 1896, one of the first things he did was to design and send to his family a little sketch of "The Agony in the Garden," beneath which he wrote, "This is but the first station." With him in his cell were a bible and a copy of Kempis's *On the Imitation of Christ*. Rizal's behavior was not unusual for someone who deeply admired Christ while condemning the obscurantism of the church. But more significant, I think, than his feelings about his impending death is the fact that by sending to his family the biblically inspired sketch and note, which would later come to the attention of more and more people, Rizal was shedding signs of an impending reenactment of the *pasyón*.

The publicized trial was a farce, but it fitted the scenario perfectly. The prosecutor called Rizal "the soul of this rebellion," who "doubtless . . . dreamed of power, pomp, and circumstance." His countrymen render him "liege homage and look up to him as a superior being whose sovereign commands are obeyed without question." A document from the office of the governor-general referred to the court described Rizal, with "no hesitation," as "the great agitator of the Philippines who is not only personally convinced that he is called to be the chosen vessel of a kind of redemption of his race, but who is considered by the masses of the native population to be a superhuman being." The judge advocate general, lending his support to this portrayal of Rizal, saw in the latter "the idol, in short, of the ignorant rabble and even of more important but equally uncultured individuals [i.e., the *katipuneros*] who saw in this professional agitator a superhuman being worthy to be called the *supremo* [a title actually used by Bonifacio]."⁸⁷

The "superhuman" image of Rizal, to the "ignorant rabble" at least, was in fact fairly accurate and much of what Rizal had done or said before 1892 contributed to it. Furthermore, during the trial, Spanish correspondents noted something about Rizal, the significance of which would not have escaped the audience. "His look is hard" wrote Manuel Alhama, "He tries to appear serene and stares at people as if to challenge them; . . . Rizal remains with his hands crossed, body motionless, and outwardly showing great serenity." Speaking in his defense, he shows "much composure." Even the Spaniards sensed that a remarkable event was taking place.

Rizal could only plead that he had had nothing to do with political affairs since July 1892, and that he was opposed to the Katipunan armed conspiracy. Naturally, "the words of Rizal produced no effect at all." The judge advocate general refused to allow publication of Rizal's manifesto condemning the uprising because, in effect, it "said in substance: 'Let us subject ourselves now, for later I shall lead to the Promised Land.' " At the trial's end, news of Rizal's impending execution quickly "spread everywhere, producing a deep impression."⁸⁸

Whether Rizal intended it or not, everything about his final hour was public, subject to rumor and interpretation. He refused to

be brought to the execution site in a military wagon, as was customary, preferring instead to walk, to undertake a *lakarán*. On the way, several people heard him say: "We are walking the way to Calvary. Now Christ's passion is better understood. Mine is very little. He suffered a great deal more. He was nailed to a Cross; the bullets will nail me to the cross formed by the bones on my back." As they neared the site that poets would later designate as his "Golgotha," Rizal exclaimed: "Oh, Father, how terrible it is to die! How one suffers . . ." This was followed by: "Father, I forgive everyone from the bottom of my heart." Entering the square formed by a company of soldiers, his executioners, he maintained an "amazing serenity," taking firm steps as if on a stroll. A Spanish doctor, wondering at his calmness, took his pulse and found it perfectly normal. Despite his objections, Rizal had his back to the firing squad, but he was prepared with his special stance and sudden twist around in death, to fall face upwards. And indeed, after his final words, *Consummatum est!* pronounced in a clear, steady voice, followed by a barrage of musket fire, he lay dead facing the breaking dawn.⁸⁹

The sketch, the notes, the trial, his *lakarán*, his serenity and self-control, his final words, the dawn breaking in the East—these and many other details confirm that the execution of Rizal was an extraordinary event, not only because an exemplary Filipino was shot for upholding his ideals, but more significantly because the event was "true to form." It was a reliving of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, but with new elements added to its field of meanings. In this context, it is not surprising that Rizal's poem *Mi Ultimo Adios* (My Last Farewell), written on the eve of his death and translated into Tagalog by Bonifacio and others, rivals if not exceeds his novels in popular esteem.⁹⁰ Not only is it good poetry, but it contributes as well to the scenario of his death by repeating the extended *Paalam* (Farewell) scene in the *pasyón*. Rizal bids an emotional farewell to his parents, relatives, beloved, and in particular, his Motherland Filipinas, on the eve of the sacrifice of his life for the redemption of this motherland.

For those who could understand neither Spanish nor Tagalog, Rizal's mode of death engendered a system of signs that could be

comprehended by all lowland, Christianized Filipinos: a Filipino Christ had been put to death by the authorities with the prodding of the friars. It was now time for the people as a whole, regardless of regional, linguistic, and racial barriers to participate in a "national" *pasyón* by joining the revolution. As Francisco Laksamana, a Katipunan veteran, put it in 1911: "Thus, in 1896, when Rizal willingly met his death (*magpakamatay*), when his teachings and example became widely known and rooted in the Filipino soul, it became the people's turn to go willingly to their deaths."⁹¹ The republican government itself encouraged this reading of Rizal. In a pamphlet published on the second anniversary of his death in December 1897, with the words *Mahalagang Kasulatan* (lit., "Highly Important Writings") splashed on its cover, the national hero is referred to as

The word named *Jose Rizal*, sent down by heaven to the land of Filipinas, in order to spend his whole life, from childhood, striving to spread throughout this vast Archipelago, the notion that righteousness must be fought for wholeheartedly.

*VERBONG nagngalang Jose Rizal, na inihulog nang langit sa lupang Filipinas, na gugulin ang boong buhay mula sa pagkabata, sa pagsusumikap na kumalat sa nilapadlapad nitong Sangkapuloan ang wagas na pagtanggol ng katowiran.*⁹²

In the revolutionary newspapers *La Independencia* and *El Heraldo de la Revolution* in late 1898 and early 1899 can be found descriptions of the commemoration of Rizal's death in various towns. In the town of Batangas, the whole populace is described as having gathered, tearfully wailing, before a portrait of Rizal "which made them recall the *desert of sorrows* traversed by the Christ of our pueblo."⁹³

When the Spanish philosopher Miguel de Unamuno calls Rizal "the Tagalog Christ suffering in the garden of Gethsemane," we begin to wonder whether Rizal, like most things Filipino, is not being assimilated into the realm of the "familiar."⁹⁴ Is Rizal's death

simply a reenactment of the *pasyón* story, albeit on a different scale, the expression of modern anticolonial sentiments in the Christian idiom of self-sacrifice and salvation? The rituals of holy week, as we discussed earlier, were, after all, the scene of various practices connected with the accumulation and control of spiritual power. There is that aspect of Christ in the *pasyón* that relates more to the *halus satria* of Javanese mythology than to Spanish models. The usually perceptive Coates seems to be missing something when he asserts that "constructing from the past, Gandhi was obliged to look back; Rizal, constructing from the present, looked solely forward."⁹⁵ Whether Rizal intended it or not, the signs he shed looked equally to the past. When he fell lifeless at Bagumbayan, countless of his countrymen "broke through the square, to make sure, said the Spanish correspondent, that the mythical, the godlike Rizal was really dead, or, according to others, to snatch away a relic and keepsake and dip their handkerchiefs in a hero's blood."⁹⁶ In death, Rizal had entered the realm of pure potency. It was widely believed that he had arisen or would soon arise from his grave; that he had gone to Bernardo Carpio's cave; that he had gone to Mount Banahaw to join another martyr, Fr. Jose Burgos; that his spirit could be reached for cures and advice.⁹⁷ We wonder whether the popularity of his farewell poem is not due to the repeated suggestion in stanzas 12 to 23 that he will remain a disembodied presence in the natural world, recognizable only through his lamenting voice.⁹⁸ Bonifacio's translation of the poem's final sentence, *Morir es descansar* (To die, to rest—it is the same), as *mamatay ay siyang pagkagupiling* gives us the promise of awakening from a short, restful sleep (*pagkagupiling*) which the Spanish *descansar* does not.⁹⁹

If Rizal's passion, death, and resurrection, with all their levels of meaning in the Philippine context, are seen as the central events of the revolution, many puzzling things about the latter are better understood. Death in battle, for instance, takes on a meaning beyond that of personal loyalty to leaders or plain fanaticism.¹⁰⁰ Various types of documents speak of the revolution as the *pasyón* of *Inang Bayan* (mother country) in which all of her sons participate; Rizal was the model of this behavior. The veterans of the

Katipunan were known to at least a generation after the event as "men of *anting-anting*."¹⁰¹ Folkloric tales of their exploits rarely fail to note their possession of talismans, secret prayer books and diagrams, and other potent objects on or inside their bodies. Like other relics of the war, they were sediments of a power-full time. Rizal was the prime source of this power. In fact, for a time at least, the problem of access to the *kapangyarihan* which the friars withheld, was solved.

In early Southeast Asia, the landscape was highly decentered, with many small states and regional identities existing in isolation and in endemic conflict among themselves. The problem for the chiefs was how to extend social ties and create more complex identities. The bilateral kinship system in most Southeast Asian societies made them indifferent towards lineage descent to forebears; ancestor status had to be earned. The unification of large segments of the landscape became possible, according to O. W. Wolters, when Hinduized men of prowess made a correspondence between their superior spiritual property and *atman* by participating in the god Shiva's *sakti*. Those who partook of the divinity were thus paid homage.¹⁰² A hierarchical system came to be developed, with the king at the apex or center, the talisman of the state embodying the qualities of prowess and inner control, situated above personal relations, which are too fragile to be the sole basis of state formation.

In the Philippines, as we saw earlier, not only did the pre-Spanish chiefs who distinguished themselves attribute their prowess to divine forces and take pains to select burial sites that would become centers of ancestor worship, but many rebel leaders also attributed their strength to Christ, the Virgin Mary, or certain saints, and apparently were revered for decades after their deaths.¹⁰³ The colonial order and its codifying processes, however, prevented the development of a sociopolitical hierarchy similar to those in the Indianized states of Southeast Asia. In the complex text that Rizal is, this question of the "center" seems to be inscribed. On one hand, Rizal is definitely a product of the colonial order who, through modern education, heralded the birth of modern Southeast Asian nationalism. On the other hand, the signs he scattered about, his gestures, works, his absences even, and finally, the

mode of his death, generated meanings linked to other—largely hidden—narratives of the Philippine past.

In a country without a tradition of hierarchy, Rizal became the necessary center, the "ancestor" in the sense of being a source of kapangyarihan for leaders of peasant movements against both foreign and local oppressors. In almost every report of "disturbances" during the first decade of American rule, there is mention of Rizal as reincarnated in "fanatical" leaders, as the object of communication in seances, as the object of worship in churches; in general, as literally the "spirit" behind the unrest. In the 1920s, Lantayug proclaimed himself a reincarnation of Rizal and won a wide following in the eastern Visayas and northern Mindanao. Another influential peasant leader named Flor Intrencherado proclaimed himself emperor of the Philippines, claiming that his powers were derived directly from Jose Rizal, as well as the martyr Fr. Jose Burgos and the Holy Ghost. Other peasant leaders who challenged the colonial order in the 1920s and 1930s claimed to be in communication with Rizal.¹⁰⁴ These leaders have, until recently at least, always belonged to the "dark underside" of the struggle for independence dominated by such ilustrado notables as Quezon, Roxas, and Osmeña. Even their recognition today in the works of such writers as Sturtevant and Constantino fails to liberate them from the categories "irrational," "fanatical," and "failure" to which ilustrado and colonial writing initially condemned them. Indeed, so much of what undergirds present historical writing will have to be brought to light and challenged before it can even be imagined that these peasant leaders *were* Jose Rizal, just as Rizal was Bernardo Carpio and Jesus Christ.

24. See Carlos Quirino, historical introduction, *The Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (1963).

25. Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (1963), 67.

26. On the significance of the 1895 Katipunan "pilgrimage" to the cave, see Iletto, *Pasyón*, 132.

27. For a discussion of Tagalog traditions regarding parental upbringing and control of loób, see Teodoro M. Kalaw, *Cinco Reglas de Nuestra Moral Antigua* (1947), 4.

28. "Ang Dapat Mabaitid" is published in Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (1963), 68–69. The translations of Bonifacio's writings used here are based on Agoncillo's.

29. *Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Bayan* is found in Agoncillo, *Writings and Trial*, 72–74.

30. In Agoncillo, *Writings and Trial*, 75–77; also Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 234.

Notes to Essay 2 "Rizal and the Underside of Philippine History"

This essay was previously published in D. Wyatt and A. Woodside, eds., *Moral Order and the Question of Change: Essays in Southeast Asian Thought* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Southeast Asia Publications, 1982).

1. John Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines* (1959). Phelan (p. 151) mentions the tendency of Filipino historians to unduly emphasize the early revolts when, actually, creative social adjustment to Spanish rule was the general response of the populace.

2. In the textbook survey, *A History of the Filipino People*, published in 1956, Teodoro Agoncillo and Oscar Alfonso discounted Philippine history prior to 1872 as "in the main, a lost history." For a discussion of this issue, see the preface to Ed. C. de Jesus, *The Tobacco Monopoly in the Philippines*.

3. In the two most widely used textbooks, *History of the Filipino People* by Teodoro Agoncillo and Milagros Guerrero (1977) and *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* by Renato Constantino (1975), roughly a third of the chapters is about the nationalist awakening and the suppressed revolutions. In *An Introduction to Philippine History* by Jose Arcilla, S.J. (1971), this is reduced to one-fifth, reflecting Horacio de la Costa, S.J.'s earlier plea for a more even treatment of Philippine history (1980).

4. Jose P. Rizal, "Filipinas dentro de cien años" (1963), 12.

5. Rizal's historical studies appeared as annotations to a seventeenth-century work by Antonio de Morga, which was republished in 1890 (see John Schumacher, S.J., "The Propagandists' Reconstruction of the Philippine Past," 269-76).

6. An example would be Antonio Molina, *The Philippines through the Centuries* (1960). This textbook has been used in some Catholic universities.

7. See Constantino, *Past Revisited*, part 1.

8. The *ilustrados* argued that the friars failed to teach true Catholicism. The revolutionists against Spain, and eventually historians themselves, readily adopted this view (see Teodoro Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses* [1956], 49; Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History*, 106-7). A more thorough appraisal is made by Onofre Corpus, *The Philippines* (1965), 34-54, but the gap between his treatment of "Christianity and Filipino society" and "resistance and nationalism" is fairly obvious.

9. For example, Agoncillo (*Revolt*, 19-96) regards the participation in the revolution of the "religious" Colorum brotherhood as "an interesting sidelight" to the real struggle, which is profoundly secular. Constantino (*Past Revisited*, 267 and *passim*), speaks of "mystic mumbo-jumbo," obscuring the real, social goals of peasant rebels. David R. Sturtevant (*Popular Uprisings in the Philippines* [1976]) and David J. Steinberg ("An Ambiguous Legacy" [1972], 165-90) simply distinguish between elite/nationalist and peasant/religious aspects of the revolutionary period.

10. Nicanor Tiongson's well-researched work on the passion play in Malolos, *Sinakulo* (1975), is marred by this narrow, evolutionist view of religion. What he sees appear to him as survivals of a superstitious and irrational age.

11. In a recent and very thorough study of an eighteenth-century rebellion, David Routledge nevertheless ends up arguing that it was not millenarist but protonationalist (*Diego Silang*, 1979). In an earlier, pioneering study, David Sweet avoided linking an 1840s rebellion to the development of nationalism, but used Hobsbawm's approach in classifying it ("A Proto-political Peasant Movement in the Spanish Philippines [1970], 94-119). Sturtevant's book, *Popular Uprisings*, ranks rebellions on a scale leading to modern, secular, revolutionary movements.

12. Says Agoncillo, "The Philippine Republic which [Aguinaldo] shaped and led gave the Philippines its most glorious and significant epoch" ("Aguinaldo in History" [1959], 14). Carlos Quirino sees the Katipunan as an initial stage which had to be "outgrown" (*The Trial of Andres Bonifacio* [1963], "historical introduction," 28). Aguinaldo's disdain of the allegedly "monarchist" tendencies of the Katipunan reflects the general attitude of republican leaders (see *Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan* [1964], 140-43).

13. Juan Caro y Mora, *La Situación del País* (1897), 13. In a petition to Aguinaldo, one Severa Kiano called him "our ever victorious and compassionate liberator, acknowledged as second God who can bring life back to my condition" (PRR, old series package, microfilm reel 117, frame 221).

14. On Apolinario de la Cruz, see Ileto, *Pasyón*, chapter 2.

15. Ileto, 146–51, 266–74. See also Milagros C. Guerrero, "Luzon at War," chapter 4.

16. Ileto, 148–49, chapter 6.

17. Annotations to Morga's *Sucesos*, quoted in Schumacher, "Propagandists' Reconstruction," 274.

18. Bienvenido Lumbera, *Tagalog Poetry*, 22–48.

19. A thorough discussion of these themes is found in Eugenio ("Awit and Corrido," 1965).

20. Preface to Rizal's edition of Morga's *Sucesos*, in Schumacher, "Propagandists' Reconstruction," 272.

21. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), 12–13.

22. Annotations to Morga's *Sucesos*, in Schumacher, 275.

23. *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*, authorship disputed, earliest available edition dated 1860. See first essay of this volume.

24. Dean Fansler, "Metrical Romances in the Philippines" (1916), 216. In a survey of 175 "representative college students," 104 replied that "they had either read in their dialects, or had been told in their dialects, or had seen acted in their town fiestas, the life of Bernardo del Carpio." Moreover, says Fansler, "the lives of such heroes as Jaime del Prado and Bernardo del Carpio are sung by the small boy driving the cattle to pasture, by the peasant working in his paddy-field, or by the itinerant beggar travelling from one town fiesta to the next."

25. This is how Rizal viewed it in his novel *El Filibusterismo* (1968), 35.

26. See first essay in this volume.

27. Summary and translation in Eugenio, "Awit and Corrido," 136–37.

28. My use of the term "power" follows that of Benedict R. O'G Anderson in his essay "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture" (1972), 1–70. Power to the Javanese is "something concrete, homogeneous, constant in total quantity, and without inherent moral implications as such" (p. 8). When used in the Javanese sense, Anderson capitalizes the word "Power" to distinguish it from its European or Western meanings. I use the word interchangeably with "potency," hence it is not capitalized.

29. For these reflections on the well-known themes of the center, the realm and power, I am indebted to Shelly Errington and her work on the Buginese kingdom of Luwu.

30. Robert Love, "The Samahan of Papa God" (1977), 206.

31. Ileto, *Pasyón*, 127.

32. Ileto (*Pasyón*, 161–90) discusses the imagery of the unabating storm and the spreading wildfire in Katipunan *awit*.

33. Ileto, *Pasyón*, 58–59, 177, 201–2, 248; Love, “Samahan,” 264, 319–23, and *passim*. I am grateful to Prospero Covar and several friends from Tanauan, Batangas, for their enlightening remarks on *anting-anting*.

34. On Burgos, see Telesforo Canseco, “Historia de la insurrección Filipina en Cavite” (1897), 98. Informants from Santo Tomas and Tanauan, Batangas, say that Malvar, Aguinaldo’s successor who carried on the war against the U.S. until 1902, is still alive in a place called *Nag-uumpugang Bato* (lit., Colliding Rocks).

35. Melanio Javierto, “Common Beliefs in Tayabas and Batangas” (1917). Eugenio (“*Awit and Corrido*”) briefly mentions a similar story, but without Rizal’s name in it (136–37).

36. “Beliefs and Practices in Laguna” (1930).

37. The literature on Southeast Asian ideas of kingship is too extensive to be enumerated here. See, for example, Anderson, “Idea of Power,” 22, and *passim*, and Clifford Geertz, *Islam Observed* (1968), 36–39. The idea of a “living amulet,” or “talisman of the state” I owe to Shelly Errington.

38. Cited by Rizal in his edition of Morga, *Sucesos* (trans. by E. Alzona; 1962), 294–95. Francisco Colin, S.J., authored a monumental chronicle of missionary efforts in the Philippines (*Labor Evangelica*, 1663). Colin’s comment must be seen in the light of efforts by the myriad of *datus* and chiefs to base their claims of superiority over others on something more conclusive and permanent than physical prowess or wealth.

39. See Esperanza B. Gatbonton, *A Heritage of Saints* (1979), and Wenceslao Retana, *Supersticiones de los Indios Filipinos* (1984).

40. Robert Reed, “Hispanic Urbanism in the Philippines” (1967), 62.

41. The importance during the resettlement of miraculous curings and missionary demonstrations of the superiority of their “magic” over that of the traditional curers and sorcerers is well known. Missionaries properly attributed such miracles to divine intervention, but there is every reason to suspect that the natives regarded the priests themselves as embodiments of potency. For a survey of the early chronicles replete with miracle stories, see John Schumacher, S.J. and Gerald Anderson, “A Bibliographical Survey of Philippine Church History” (1969), 389–97. The stories told about Fr. Pio de Zuzuarregui, Augustinian parish priest of Santa Cruz, Manila, from 1860 to 1870, are revealing: he had curing powers, was worshipped as a “second Christ come to the Philippines,” could appear at different places at the same time, had “powers for penetrating one’s innermost thoughts,” etc. The person who collected these stories found, in 1922, old men and women in Santa Cruz wearing remnants of Father Pio’s “rags” and scapulars that still had powers of healing and

driving away the devil (Enrique Torres, "The Legend of Father Pio de Zuzuarregui" in Beyer Collection, Tagalog Ethnography 10, Paper 347, 18 March 1922). According to anthropologist Fernando Zialcita, parish priests in the Ilocos are still regarded by many as having special powers since, among other things, only they can translate the Latin script in *an-ting-anting* (personal communication). See also Love, "Samahan," 216, 324.

42. See the discussion on class distinctions and religious behavior in Reed, "Hispanic Urbanism," 169. Rizal's novels are another source for *principalía*-friar relationships.

The quotation is from Evergisto Bazaco, O.P., *History of Education in the Philippines* (1953), 55.

43. See the section "Heroes Legendarios y Reales," in Teodoro Kalaw, *Cinco Reglas* (1947). In the collection Historical Data Papers (PNL), *an-ting-anting* stories revolve around filibusters against Spain, bandit chiefs, and veterans of the revolution.

44. Phelan, *Hispanization*, 58; Corpus, *The Philippines*, 49–54; Henry Fox, S.J., "Primary Education in the Philippines, 1565–1863" (1965), 207–31.

45. Statement of Juan Delgado, S.J., in 1754, in *Historia General* (1892), 294–95. Also, Horacio de la Costa, S.J., "The Development of the Native Clergy," 65–104.

46. On the distinction between these two orders of knowledge see Ileto, *Pasyón*, 177, 202, 248. Certain *ilustrados* themselves wrote about this. See, for example, T. H. Pardo de Tavera, *The Legacy of Ignorantism (Ignorantismo)*, in English and Spanish (1921). The missionaries, says this *ilustrado*, "condemned the old Pagan superstitions but they taught new superstitions more powerful than the original" (p. 16).

47. The Latin inscriptions in the bible, missal, and other church texts were potential means of access to *kapangyarihan*, but, paraphrasing Love's informants, "the secret knowledge was kept from Filipinos for hundreds of years by the Spanish friars, and even today" (Love, "Samahan," 324).

48. Membership in *samahan* comes largely from the *taga-linang* (people from the field, peasants), but Love stresses that the Catholic church is the "setting within which and to a certain extent against which the *taga-linang* of Majayjay perform their religious duties" (p. 22). A Spanish priest's view of sociocultural gradations from the town center at the base toward the slopes of Mount Isarog in Kabikolan is quoted in Norman Owen, "The *Principalía* in Philippine History" (1974), 324 n. 55.

49. Alfred W. McCoy, "Animism and Philippine Peasant Ideology," in David Wyatt and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Moral Order and the Question of Change* (1982).

50. On Apolinario de la Cruz, see Ileto, *Pasyón*, chapter 2; on Buhawi, see Donn V. Hart, "Buhawi of the Bisayas" (1967), 366–96.

51. Katherine Mayo, *The Isles of Fear* (1925), 181.

52. The full title of the text used here is *Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin* (Account of the Sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ), edited by Fr. Mariano Pilapil and first published in 1814. Quotations in this essay are from the 1925 edition.

53. Iletto, *Pasyón*, 15–33.

54. "Awit na Pinagdaanang Buhay ng Yslas Filipinas" (Awit of the Life Story of the Philippine Islands) by "Dimatigtig," *Biak-na-Bato*, 15 July 1900, MS, PRR, box 1–19.

55. In Teodoro Agoncillo, ed., *Writings and Trial*, 68–69.

56. *Remontado* comes from the Spanish word meaning "to mount again" or "to take to the woods" (see Iletto, *Pasyón*, 228). *Vagamundos* (lit., "vagabonds") is the Spanish colonial term for those without a fixed residence who escaped tax impositions. *Tirong* is the Batangas Tagalog version of wandering knights-in-armor, ready to face death (see Kalaw, *Cinco Reglas*, 6–7).

57. Jose P. Santos, *Si Andres Bonifacio at ang Himagsikan* (1935), 18; Iletto, *Pasyón*, 128–29. "Pilipino" and "Pilipinas" were most likely not used by Bonifacio himself, who preferred "Tagalog" and "Katagalugan." Since "Filipino" meant, in Bonifacio's time, a Spaniard born in the islands, Bonifacio's "Tagalog" encompasses Spain's native subjects who join the rebellion and not merely the ethnic grouping Tagalog. This is clear from the multiethnic membership of the Katipunan. Nationalist transcribers of Bonifacio's writings have understandably often substituted "Pilipino" for Bonifacio's "Tagalog."

58. Agoncillo, *Revolt*, 50; Iletto, *Pasyón*, 121–22.

59. Isabelo de los Reyes, "The Katipunan" (1898), 209.

60. It is possible to view Philippine movements entirely within the limits set by Norman Cohn in *The Pursuit of the Millenium* (1957).

61. See Iletto, *Pasyón*, 57–58. For the beginnings of a "metalinguistic analysis" of *loób*, see Leonardo Mercado, S.V.D. (1972), 577–601.

62. Anderson, "Idea of Power," 38–39.

63. This is true, at least, for Batangas, Laguna, and Quezon provinces where practically all of my meager fieldwork was done. Love states that the most common Latin word in books of curing, *oraciones*, and similar texts is *egosum*. "The protestations of the [Catholic] priests that they can make no sense of these words and phrases is proof of the wiliness of priests and of the extreme secrecy and therefore efficacy of these words" (Love, 216). Pardo de Tavera, however, fails to mention *egosum* in his list of Latin phrases that constitute "a real array of magic invocations for avoiding evil, ridding of danger, securing more good, and attaining some grace" (*Ignorantism*, 17).

64. Simeon Aranas, *Kaligaligayang Bundok ng Banahaw* (1927), and Iletto, *Pasyón*, 28–30.

65. Kalaw, *Cinco Reglas*, 10. The author, citing Isabelo de los Reyes, says that awit and komedya were vehicles for the teaching of valor and self-control to the youth. Rizal, thanks to his mother's influence, was steeped in such literature and drama in his boyhood.

66. "The Healing Look" (1973), 6-7.

67. "The Magic Finger" in Santos, 8-9.

68. Austin Coates, *Rizal* (1968), 127.

69. Coates, 136. A slightly different version is found in Leon Ma. Guerrero, *The First Filipino* (1963), 220.

70. Coates, *Rizal*, 128.

71. For a discussion of loób and knowledge, see Ileto, *Pasyón*, 58-59, 177, 201-2.

72. Parallels abound in the lives of other "powerful" men. Apolinario de la Cruz returned to Lucban with new knowledge after some time in Manila. With this he attracted many of the "common *tao*" to his *cofradía* in the 1830s. Undertaking a pilgrimage to a holy mountain or other sacred site was tantamount to "travelling abroad," the object being to emulate Christ or some awit hero (such as Bernardo Carpio), and also to gain some "secret knowledge" from old seers and *maestros* one encountered. See also Love, "*Samahan*," 321-27.

73. From *Inang España* (Mother Spain), by the Iglesia Sagrada Filipina ng Cinco Vucales y Virtudes Tierra Santa de Jerusalem (Holy Philippine Church of the Five Vowels and Virtues, Holy Land of Jerusalem) in Marcelino Foronda, "Cults Honoring Rizal" (1961), 125-26. Another version of the poem is given on p. 110.

74. "The Notebook of Dr. Rizal," in Santos, *Rizal Miracle Tales*, 80-82.

75. Coates, *Rizal*, 129.

76. For stories of the appearance, disappearance, and survival in fires of the writings of Bonifacio and Jacinto, see Nepe (pseud.), "The Thirteen Miraculous Escapes of the Bonifacio Document," clippings in Pedro Cortes, *Mga Kasulatan ukol sa Himagsikan* (1927). Analogies with anting-anting stories, such as the following, are obvious: "A certain Cabesang Juan Vicente used a triangular book which he used to take care of and light every Holy Thursday and Good Friday. By doing so, this book would have letters on the printless pages and that was just for a short time. The spell about any desired thing was taken from this book with reference to an old text, the 'Libro Primera Tomo.' . . . Many an old man possessed such talisman, inherited from father to son, and so on" (Historical Data Papers, Paete, Laguna province).

77. Coates, *Rizal*, 159.

78. *Rizal's Correspondence with Fellow Reformists* (1963), 344-45. According to Francis St. Clair (pseud.), Rizal and his ilustrado party "were backed by a mass of the people of Calamba . . . In their eyes he was a

'Messiah' or 'Mahdi,' their prophet and redeemer . . . A Spanish proverb says: 'In blind man's land the one-eyed man is a king.' Rizal was a king" (*The Katipunan* [1902], 109).

79. Jose Arcilla, S.J., ed., "Documents Concerning the Calamba Deportations of 1891" (1970), 617.

80. Coates, *Rizal*, 233. This glimpse of the popular image of Rizal in central Luzon leads us to believe that the situation in southern Tagalog was even more intense. Miracle stories of the type that Santos collected must have already been forming by 1892.

81. Agoncillo and Guerrero, *History*, 179.

82. Constantino, "Veneration Without Understanding" (1970), 125-46.

83. Coates, *Rizal*, 85. For example, on 30 December 1882, Rizal had a frightful nightmare, duly entered into his diary, about his death. Thirteen years later, on exactly the date of his dream, he was executed.

84. Quoted in Coates, *Rizal*, 181.

85. Santos, *Rizal Miracle Tales*, 123-25.

86. Among the early Filipinos, death is expressed "in the symbol of a long journey, usually over the waters, or by a descent into the bowels of the earth through a cave under a high mountain." This and other striking parallels are discussed in Francisco Demetrio, S.J., "Death" (1966).

87. Quoted from the documents of the trial, in Horacio de la Costa, S.J., ed. and trans., *The Trial of Rizal* (1961), 111, 120, 137.

88. *El Imparcial*, 27 December 1896. Santiago Mataix (*El Heraldo*, 27 December 1896) also mentions Rizal's "great serenity." These and other news reports are translated by Domingo Abella in "Trial and Execution of Rizal" (1961), 148-62.

89. Carlos Da Silva and Jesus Ma. Cavana, C.M., *Threshold of Immortality* (1961), 25; Coates, *Rizal*, 330-31.

90. Bonifacio's translation is found in Agoncillo, *Writings and Trial*, 79-80. Carlos Ronquillo claims that Caviteño poet and revolutionist Diego Mojica did the translation bearing Bonifacio's signature ("*Mga Babasahing Katawatawa*" [1910], 26).

91. Ronquillo, (1911), 25.

92. Pamphlet in SD 919, PRR, reel 54. In a decree published in the newspaper *El Heraldo de la Revolution* (Malolos, 25 December 1898), Pres. Emilio Aguinaldo made 30 December a "day of national mourning" on which the Philippine flag was to be flown at half mast.

93. *La Independencia*, 11 January 1899.

94. Quoted in Coates, *Rizal*, 358 n. 1. Coates adds that "the parallel between his life and that of Christ, in addition to the element of sacrifice in it, is that each contains the aim of cleansing the religion of his country in the age in which he lived." Coates quotes a part of Rizal's letter of 20

January 1890: "Christ did the same with the religion of his country when the Pharisees so exceedingly abused it."

95. Coates, *Rizal*, 356. The reference is to "an archaic civilization lying inert in the past," which Gandhi "sought to bring nearer to the present."

96. Guerrero, *First Filipino*, 490–91. On the eve of the execution *El Imparcial* reported that the petition of Rizal's family for the body to be handed over to them had been denied "to prevent that the body of the agitator be an object for demonstrations and that his clothes be distributed as relics among the fanatics" (translation by Abella, "Trial and Execution of Rizal," 158).

97. Wenceslao Retana, *Vida y Escritos del Dr. Jose Rizal* (1907), 448; Frank Laubach, *Rizal* (1936), 381; Canseco, "Historia" (1897), 98. In 1906, Col. Harry Bandholtz of the constabulary accused former revolutionary Col. Emilio Zurbano of "deluding many of the ignorant Taos" about Rizal's spirit dictating to his wife "prescriptions for all diseases" ("Memoranda for Colonel Harbord," Tayabas province, in BPBC).

98. This is, in fact, how the Rizalist cults of this century have interpreted it (see Foronda, "Cults Honoring Rizal," 70–71). Note the remarkable links between Rizal's poem and the following account of a peasant leader in the early 1900s: "Before long, word spread through Urdaneta that Mrs. Baltazar's disembodied form had materialized over several watering places. Her spirit, according to Pampliega's animated parishioners, was imparting curative powers to the town's most popular wells and fountains" (Sturtevant, *Popular Uprisings*, 101).

99. Bonifacio (or Mojica) not only translated the poem but reconstructed it in such a way that one stanza in the original became two in the Tagalog version. Thus, apart from the nuances imparted by the Tagalog language, subordinate ideas in the original were given their own existence (Mary Jane Po, University of the Philippines, personal communication).

100. Spanish and American observers could not quite understand why so many Filipinos appeared to be unafraid of death, quite willingly throwing themselves into battle despite the impossible odds against them (see Juan Caro y Mora, *La Situacion*, 14; "Affairs in the Philippine Islands," Senate Doc. 331, 57th Congress, I, 637–38).

101. Hermogenes Caluag, "Some Tagalog Beliefs and Maxims," 1915, in Beyer Collection, Tagalog Ethnography 3, paper 156.

102. Oliver Wolters, "Khmer 'Hinduism'" (1979), 427–42.

103. Iletto, *Pasyón*, 80, 100–1; Routledge, *Diego Silang*, 80–81.

104. See Sturtevant, *Popular Uprisings*, 144–45, 164, 177, 273 and passim; Foronda, "Cults Honoring Rizal."

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by

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